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ABSTRACT

Ways to increase the involvement of parents in child development programs are presented in this training manual. The sections of the manual are as follows: I. Parent Involvement; II. How Parents Can Participate; III. Making Participation Meaningful; IV. What the Parent Groups Do; V. The Parent Sub-Committee; VI. What Would the Parents Be Interested In?; VII. Parent Involvement and the Head Start Director; VIII. Parent Involvement and the Center Staff; IX. The Policy Council and the CAA Board of Directors; and X. Help, Hints and Concluding Thoughts. Appendixes provide the following: A. Prisoner's Dilemma Game; B. The Sub-Committee, Center Committee, and Policy Council; and C. Sample By-Laws for a Head Start Policy Council--A Guide for Revising or Developing By-Laws. (DB)

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adult involvement in child development for staff and

PARENTS

A TRAINING MANUAL BY

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PS 006486

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

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PREFACE

During the past several years, Humanics Associates, a non-profit training organization, has concentrated heavily on ways to help Head Start Centers to increase the involvement of parents in their operations. With the Head Start program about to launch a new phase of its growth, it seemed timely to draw together some of the learnings and lessons of that experience. In keeping with this format, we have used our collective experience in working with child development centers across the nation to develop this manual.

The authors would like to express their appreciation to Barbara Whittaker, Assistant Regional Director for the Office of Child Development, Region IV and members of her staff, especially John Mouton, Deputy Assistant Regional Director. Ed Vaughn, Program Resource and Review Specialist, and James Shelton, Parent Involvement and Social Services Specialist, who have provided support for the training activities undertaken by Humanics.

We also appreciate the efforts of the many people who made contributions to the preparation of this manual, especially to Elizabeth Dixon, who provided the illustrations and made many valuable suggestions about the graphics and layout, to Matt Suarez, Joe Shifalo, Gary Holmes and Gene Peters who tested many of these concepts with individual agencies and helped with modifications, and to Annette Day who did the typesetting and contributed many ideas and revisions which have been incorporated throughout the manual. Special thanks are also due to Steve Gillespie who helped conceptualize and develop this manual.

We also appreciate the cooperation of the staff and parents of the Head Start Programs with whom Humanics has worked, particularly:

Economic Opportunity, Inc., Chattanooga, Tennessee
Community Action Program Committee, Inc., Pensacola, Florida
Economic Opportunity Program, Inc., Miami, Florida
Greater Jacksonville Economic Opportunity, Inc., Jacksonville, Florida
Lee County Head Start, Auburn, Alabama
Little River Community Action, Inc., Daphne, Alabama
Louisville-Jefferson County Community Action Agency, Louisville, Kentucky
Lowndes County Board of Education, Hayneville, Alabama
Mobile Area Community Action Committee, Mobile, Alabama
Montgomery Community Action Committee, Montgomery, Alabama
Okaloosa County Community Action, Inc., Fort Walton Beach, Florida
The Opportunity Corporation of Madison, Buncombe Counties, Ashville, North Carolina
Putnam County Community Action Committee, Palatka, Florida
Salisbury-Rowan Community Service Council, Inc., Salisbury, North Carolina
Wateree Community Actions, Inc., and Sumter Uplift Incorporated, Sumter, South Carolina

The authors alone assume sole responsibility for the ideas and opinions expressed herein.

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I parent involvement

why have it?
is it possible?

Parent Involvement Coordinators often ask

What can parent involvement really do? Is it necessary?
Does it make any difference?
Is it possible to get parents involved in the Center?
Why has it been so difficult?
How can I get parents more interested?
Can the Parent Involvement Coordinator really have influence?

This chapter will help you to begin examining these questions in greater detail. It will tell you some answers. And where you may not yet have answers, it will suggest some ways you can start to get answers for your Program, the Director, and the parents.

IS IT NECESSARY?

Why do we have parent involvement? To begin with, we have it because the Office of Child Development says we have to.

Who is that? The Office of Child Development (OCD) is a United States Government Agency. It's a part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW).

Why do we care about OCD? Well, they supply the money for Head Start. They are also one of the Federal Agencies charged with the task of helping the United States improve its social and educational programs for children. Their recommendations are based on the knowledge, experience, and research for several years.

OCD has some good reasons for making a rule that every Headstart program must have effective, meaningful parent participation.

Here is what OCD says about parent involvement. These words are taken from the Policy Manual issued to all Headstart Directors and staff.

EVERY HEADSTART PROGRAM MUST HAVE EFFECTIVE PARENT PARTICIPATION !!!

Project Head Start must continue to discover new ways for parents to become deeply involved in decision-making about the program and in the development of activities that they deem helpful and important in meeting their particular needs and conditions . . . . Every Head Start program is obligated to provide the channels through which such participation and involvement can be provided for and enriched.

OCD's message is clear. Parent involvement is a must. In the future, the Agencies which have good parent involvement will be those whi h get money to grow and expand. Your Director should understand this.

WHAT CAN IT DO?

We said that we must have parent involvement because OCD has made a guideline that it is essential. We also observed that OCD has some good reasons for parent involvement. You also have been working to get parents involved and you have some ideas about why. So, let's look at the following questions about what you can accomplish with your job.

Please circle the response you believe to be most accurate:

1. Help the parents to be better parents	LIKELY	UNLIKELY
2. Help the teachers and aides to do a better job with the children	LIKELY	UNLIKELY
3. Help the children to have more fun and learn more	LIKELY	UNLIKELY
4. Help the Center to get money and to continue running	LIKELY	UNLIKELY
5. Help to unite the community and to bring about improvement in the community such as better lighting, better roads, or better schools	LIKELY	UNLIKELY

Did you think these were all possible? They are. Look at each of these ideas in detail.

parent involvement can

Help the parents to be better parents

You will do that if you can bring the staff together with the parents. They can teach the parents things about how children learn, how they grow, what foods they should eat, and how they can continue to learn at home. They will know more about how to help their children and will be better parents because of it.

Help the teachers and aides to do a better job with the children.

You will do that when you help teachers and aides to talk with parents about real problems and issues with the children. The teachers will learn more about each child and will be able to give him or her better care, counseling and help.

Help the children to have more fun and learn more.

You can make this happen again by bringing parents and teachers together to talk about the individual strengths and weaknesses of each child. The parents will know more about how to help their children at home. The teachers will know more about how to help each child at the Center.

Help the Center to get money and to continue running.

You will play a big part in whether your community will continue to have a Head Start program. In the future, communities with strong Parent Involvement Programs and good parent participation will be the most likely to receive money for for Child Development Programs.

Help to unite the community and to bring about improvements within it.

You will be doing this when you bring parents together in an effective group and give them the formal machinery to make themselves heard. An example of formal machinery would be a strong Center Committee which makes decisions about the center. When parents find that they can get together and make decisions about the Head Start Center, they may want to get together for other community issues.

In one way you are very lucky. You can help people lead better lives. You can play a big part in helping a lot of children get a real "head start" in life.

Can the Coordinator Have Any Influence?

Getting parents involved is a tough job. But it can be done. Many Head Start staff have the wrong ideas about parents. These wrong ideas get in their way when they try to involve parents. Here are some very common false statements we often hear:

"The parents from our Center aren't interested in the program."

"The parents from our Center don't care much about their children."

"The parents from our Center don't see how their participation makes any difference."

"The parents from our Center are too lazy to come out in the evenings to attend meetings."

"The parents from our Center don't believe that we really mean it when the Center says it wants them to participate."

"The parents from our Center don't have enough education to participate in the affairs of the Center."

"The parents from our Center don't know how to go about participating or where the Center wants them to help."

"The parents from our Center never have much opportunity to talk about their children during our meetings because we always need to talk about other business. They don't come to meetings because they don't care about that stuff. Their only interest is their children."

What do you believe? How many of these statements do you feel are true? The following short stories may help you find out. Test yourself. Read each story carefully. At the end you'll find a question and some answers to choose from.

story 1

Betty Jones' little boy Tommy, aged 4, attended the Wabash County Head Start Center. Betty seldom came to parent meetings. When she did come, she had little to say. The Parent Involvement Coordinator felt she had little interest in the Center. One day Tommy came home with his shirt torn. He told his mother that the teacher had hit him and torn his shirt.

What do you think Betty Jones probably did?

A. Told Tommy he was a bad boy for making the teacher hit him.
B. Laughed and told Tommy he deserved to get hit.
C. Went as quickly as possible to the Center to find out what had happened and to learn if the story was true.
D. Paid no attention and did nothing.

story 2

One day the Parent Involvement Coordinator from the Typical Community Headstart Center received a telephone call from her Director. He said a very important visitor from the Federal Regional Office of HEW was going to visit the Center and wanted to meet with parents. The Coordinator told all the parents that an important visitor was coming and that they should come to a meeting to meet with him.

What do you think probably happened on the night of the meeting?

A. Very few parents showed up for the meeting.
B. An unusually large group of parents came to the meeting.
C. A moderate-sized group showed up.

For Story 1, you probably circled "C" — "Went as quickly as possible to the Center to find out what had happened and to learn if the story was true." For most parents in most communities in most Centers, this is probably exactly what would happen?

What does it mean? It means that parents do care about what happens to their children. It means that whenever they think their child is getting a bad deal, they'll try to do something about it right away. It means that parents probably do not participate more in Head Start because they are satisfied with the job you are doing and don't believe they could help make it any better.

For Story 2, a number of Parent Involvement Coordinators have been surprised that the answer is almost always B — "An unusually large group of parents came to the meeting." In Center after Center when parents learn that an important visitor is coming to visit their Center and to meet with them — they show up.

What does this mean? It means that parents do care about their Centers. They will show up for a meeting if they believe it will make a real difference.

These stories should remind us of some things we often forget when working with parents. Parents usually care more for their children than they do even for themselves. They work long hours to pay for their schooling and clothes. They tolerate unhappy marriages to provide a home. When they genuinely believe their children's interest is at stake, they will make great sacrifices. You are probably a parent. Isn't this true for you and your children?

If these beliefs are true, then, we can state some "Principles of Parent Involvement" — something like this:

1. Parents do care about their children. They will participate when they believe they are helping their children or are learning something which they believe will help them to be better parents.

2. Parents do care about their Head Start Centers and want them to continue. Parents will participate if they believe that their participation will make a difference to the Center. Telling them it makes a difference does not cause them to believe it. They must feel it.

3. Parents are adults. They do not like to sit around in meetings if they don't think they are being useful, if they don't think they can contribute anything, if they are uncomfortable physically or emotionally, and if they think they are being treated like children. They do not want to participate in "token" meetings. Telling them they are useful or can contribute, for example, will make no difference. They must feel it, believe it, and see it come true.

You can use these principles to get better participation in your Parent Involvement Program. You can use these principles also to get the parents to have real influence in the day-to-day activities of your Head Start Program. In this manual we will be examining ways we believe will help you do this. But before we go on, you might want to pause for a brief review of what we've looked at so far.

review

THE PARENT COORDINATOR'S JOB

What have you learned from this chapter? It might help you organize your thoughts before going ahead to take a few minutes and jot down your ideas:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are these some of the things you thought you learned?
You have a very significant and important job.
You can help the Head Start program to stay in operation.
You can help parents to be better parents and their children to have better experiences.
You can help the community to improve itself in many ways.

That is what the authors hoped this chapter would show and, finally, here is what we hoped you would learn about your own possibilities as a Parent Involvement Coordinator:

You do have influence in the Agency.
The Federal Government and your Agency do care about parent involvement.
There are guidelines and rules to help you do your job.

You can learn skills and information in this manual which will help you do the kind of job HEW, your Director and you want to do.

11/12/13

II how parents can participate

In the last chapter we discussed the importance of parent involvement. We also suggested some principles for effective parent involvement.

In this chapter we are going to do *two things*

1. We will list all the major ways parents can be involved in the Head Start Program and the formal machinery which exists for that; and

2. We will show how the principles of parent involvement can help you to get parents involved in the different groups which the Program must help establish and support.

WAYS PARENTS CAN PARTICIPATE

Parents can participate in many ways. They can participate in formal activities and groups or in informal ways. One part of your job is to use your imagination to think up more and more ways to get parents involved. You can also use the Center staff and the parents to come up with new ways.

OCD has already done some of this for you. It has said that there are some things parents must be involved in. These are formal groups and activities like the following:

The Center Committee
The Policy Council
Volunteers in all program components.

Many Headstart Programs have found other informal ways to involve parents. Some of these are:

— In meetings with the teachers and other staff;
— In special projects for the children, such as picnics and field trips;
—In special committees for special problems such as transportation or facilities.

Each of these areas are important. Anything you can do to get parents meaningfully involved in your program is important. But your first concern must be with the formal groups OCD Head Start policy says are essential — the Center Committee and the Policy Council.

Let's review what each of these groups is supposed to do.

The Center Committee

The Center Committee is primarily an advisory and helping committee. The Committee's purpose is to help the parents of the Center express their ideas about the program which will best meet the needs of the children. It assists with the selection of the staff, the preparation of the program plans and grant package, evaluations, the fulfillment of special conditions, and so forth, and makes recommendations to the Policy Council.

The following is a list of the functions of the Center Committee. You may want to test your memory about its purposes and responsibilities. You can do this by completing the following exercise.

Instructions:
Circle the letter beside the function which you believe is correct.
Here is an example:
The Center Committee:

> A. Hires the Center Staff; B. Elects representatives to the Policy Council; C. Decides the Center's curriculum; D. Approves the expenditure of all the Center's funds; E. None of these.

The Center Committee:

1 A. May participate in recruiting and screening new Center employees;
B. Tells teachers when they are not doing well;
C. Fires staff;
D. Decides menus;
E. None of these.

2 A. Assists in the developing of Center's curriculum.
B. Decides menus;
C. Hires new staff;
D. Approves the expenditure of Center funds;
E. None of these.

3 A. Plans, conducts and participates in Center activities for parents' night.
B. Decides what supplies the Center can buy;
C. Reviews and makes recommendations about the curriculum;
D. Decides menus;
E. Hires new staff.

4 A. Approves the expenditure of Center funds;
B. Decides curriculum;
C. Finds transportation;
D. Hires staff;
E. Assists Center staff in finding people and resources (for example volunteers) to carry out Center activities.

5 A. Approves all decisions of the Director;
B. Recruits new staff;
C. Helps parents to find ways to get together and share common interests;
D. Finds transportation for the children;
E. None of these.

Answers: 1 - A; 2 - A; 3 - A; 4 - E; 5 - C.

The Policy Council

Let's look briefly now at what the Policy Council is supposed to do. This group has more power and influence than the Center Committee. It is called a Policy Council because it helps the Director to establish policy and make decisions about what the Program will do. Not all parents are members of this group. The parents elect representatives from their Center Committee to attend. There is no exact number of parents who can be members. The rule is that at least 50% of this group must be parents. The others must be representatives from the community, public and private agencies and major community civic or professional organizations which have a concern for children of low income families and can contribute to the program. However, the representatives from the community must be approved by the parents elected to the Policy Council. This group also has specific duties and responsibilities. Again, you might want to test yourself to see how well you remember what these duties are.

The Policy Council:

6 A. Approves or disapproves the goals of the program;
B. Approves Child Development needs;
C. Determines the location of the central office;
D. Is responsible for developing plans to use community resources;
E. None of these.

7 A. Is responsible for establishing a method of hearing and resolving community complaints about the Head Start program;
B. Must direct the day-to-day operations of Head Start staff;
C. Must select the children;
D. Must direct the day-to-day operation of Delegate Agency Head Start staff;
E. None of these.

8 A. Has operating responsibility for conducting an evaluation of the Agency's Head Start program;

B. Has responsibility for making major changes in the budget and work program while program is in operation;

C. Hires and fires Headstart Director of Delegate Agency;

D. Hires and fires Headstart staff of Delegate Agency;

E. None of these.

9 A. Must approve or disapprove major changes in budget or work program while program is in operation;

B. Has no general responsibility to prepare requests for funds for the proposed work program;

C. Must be consulted about day-to-day operations of the Delegate Agency Headstart staff;

D. May be consulted about hiring or firing the Delegate Agency Headstart Director;

E. None of these.

10 A. Does not approve or disapprove the location of Centers or classes;

B. May be consulted about the daily operation of the Head Start program;

C. Must be consulted about criteria for admitting children to the Head Start program;

D. Must be consulted about hiring and firing Delegate Agency staff;

E. None of these.

Answers: 1 - A; 2 - E; 3 - C; 4 - E; 5 - C; 6 - A; 7 - A; 8 - A; 9 - A; 10 - C.
As Parent Involvement Coordinators, it's very important to know exactly what these groups are for and what they can and cannot do.

To read this manual you will want to know some of the basic responsibilities of the parent groups. The following is a brief review of the Center Committee and the Policy Council.

> If you already know this material, you may want to skip ahead to the next section of this chapter -- "What Gets Parents Involved?"

THE CENTER COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP: Or, "who should be on it?" -- Parents whose children are attending the Head Start Center. No staff member may serve on the Center Committee.

PURPOSE: To share information about the children with staff; To join other parents in planning activites and programs of benefit to themselves and the children; To gather information about the child development needs and community concerns vital to the actions of the policy council; To assist staff in delivering the best possible program for children.

SOME FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Here are some examples of how center committees have carried out their functions and responsibilities.

(Additional functions and suggestions for achieving them are to be found in Appendix B).

1. To provide ideas and opinions about the child development needs in the community;

   At the monthly meetings: parents may plan to survey the child development needs in their neighborhood or visit other child development centers.
2. To provide ideas and opinions about the goals of Head Start.

   Inform the community about what is possible and available in Head Start Centers. Inform Policy Council about how the Center is meeting or not meeting the needs of the neighborhood.
3. To recommend community resources available to the Head Start Center.

   List the resources that parents are aware of that could be helpful to the Center. Determine what other community resources are needed. Invite all resources to center parents meeting to discuss how you feel they could be helpful.

4. Provide ideas and opinions to plans for the recruitment of children:
   Discuss who ought to be in the program. What do the Head Start guidelines say about who is eligible. (Ask your staff.) What special problems should be considered. How should vacancies be advertised. Take recommendations about how children are to be recruited to the Policy Council.

5. To work with Center staff to carry out daily activities program.
   At the Center meeting develop a schedule of who can volunteer to assist in the classroom. Survey parent group for special talents, musical, story telling, building, etc.

6. To plan, conduct and participate in programs and activities for center parents and staff.
   At meeting discuss what parents like to do best. Choose some of these ideas and see if they can be implemented.

7. To participate in recruiting and screening of center employees within Federal Guidelines.
   Select a personnel committee to interview and recommend applicants for employment in your Center.

THE POLICY COUNCIL

MEMBERSHIP: Or, "Who should be on it?" — At least one half of the members must be parents whose children are in the Head Start Program. The other members are approved by those parents. They may be people from the community who have something special to offer the Head Start Program Center. For example, one such person might be the Chairman of the School Board.

PURPOSE: To give parents and representatives of the community a chance to influence and shape the Headstart Center so that it does what the community wants. Also, this group has the responsibility for finding resources within the community which will make the Center as good as possible. In addition, the Council can serve as another important voice to local, State, and Federal Agencies about the community's wants and needs.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: You will find the duties of the Policy Council are very different from the duties of the Center Committee. Some, however, are different. The Policy Council has special and unique responsibilities.

(Additional functions and suggestions for achieving them are to be found in Appendix B.)

Planning:

To provide ideas and opinions about the child development needs in the community;

To approve or disapprove the goals of the Head Start Program;

To approve or disapprove plans to use all the community resources available to the Head Start program;

To approve or disapprove what Agencies will be permitted to operate a Head Start Center and in what areas in the community Head Start Centers will operate;

To approve or disapprove the Center's plans to recruit children;

To approve or disapprove the program's plans to recruit children; in other words, what children from what kinds of families will be allowed to enter the Program, within H.E.W. Guidelines.

Example: The Head Start Director could decide that the "criteria" will exclude all middle-income children. If it decided that some children should be entered from middle-income families, the Policy Council would disapprove this criteria.

General Administration:

To approve or disapprove the services which the Community Action Agency Central Office will provide to the Head Start Center;

TO TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR establishing a method for hearing and resolving community complaints about the Head Start program;

Must give advice and opinions about the Head Start Agency's standards for acquiring space, equipment, and supplies;
Must approve or disapprove of the Grantee Agency's choice of a Head Start Director (Usually a CAA);
Must approve or disapprove of the Grantee Agency's staff for the Head Start Program.

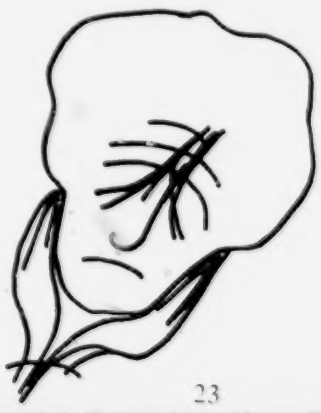
Grant Application Process:

Approve or disapprove of the Grantee Agency's request for funds and the proposed work program before it is submitted to HEW/OCD;
Before any changes are made in the budget or work program while the program is in operation, the Policy Council must approve or disapprove of those changes.

Evaluation:

The Policy Council conducts an evaluation of the Agency's Head Start program during the program year.

That's a long list! That's a lot of responsibility! You can see that if these Committees and Councils do their job, the parents will have a real say in how their Center is run, what children are admitted, how and what the children are taught, and who teaches them.



Just for fun, stop and think for a minute what would happen if the parents in your community were actively involved in these ways. Let your imagination go.

Here's one hope. The parents would find that they are capable and can do these things. They would find that there is strength in numbers and unity. They might even want to turn to other problems in their community beyond child development. They might begin to solve other community problems together.

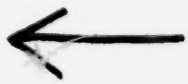
That's a dream. It's a very realistic dream. Before it can come true, however, you must get down to the nitty-gritty of helping parents get together to form strong Councils and Committees and to take an active part in their Program.

WHAT GETS PARENTS INVOLVED?

Let's begin by looking at how you can get parents involved. First, let's look again at the principles of parent involvement.

1. Parents do care about their children. They will participate when they believe they are helping their children or are learning something which they believe will help them to be better parents.

What does this mean for you? It means that if parents have not become involved in the program, they do not see how their participation will help their children. And they probably do not see how it will help them.



Perhaps now you are thinking that "it's different" in your program — that the parents in your community are different somehow. That is very unlikely. You may be saying, "We tell them over and over again how important their participation is — they should know!"

If you'll stop and think for a moment, you may recall that you haven't changed many of your beliefs or attitudes simply because somebody told you they were wrong, or that there were better ones. You don't buy a car, for instance, because someone on TV says it's a good buy. You might go and look at it for that reason, but you want to drive it and have a good experience with it. It's the same with parents. They need to have an experience in which they find that involvement in the Program does help them.

So, the importance of our first "principle" of parent involvement is that Parent Involvement Coordinators must find ways for parents to have experiences which:

help their children; and
help them as parents.

2. Parents do care about their Head Start Centers and want them to continue. Parents will participate if they believe that their participation will make a difference to the Center and to their child.

To test whether this principle was true, we asked a number of parents the following question:

Do you think your Head Start Center needs your opinions, ideas and help to be a good Center -- do the Centers need these things from parents to be good?

Here are some possible answers to that question. See if you can guess what the parents actually said. Circle the number you feel the parents from your program might give. You may select as many answers as you think they might give.

1 Yes. The parents know more about their children and how they should be taught than anyone else.

2 Yes. The parents can give the staff help and guidance about what the children need to learn.

3 No. The staff are professionals. They have more education than we do. They are experts. We can't tell them anything they don't already know.

4 Yes. We parents have a lot of good ideas which could really help the Program.

5 No. We don't know anything about how to run a Headstart Center.

6 No. We don't have enough time to learn all about the Head Start Center. couldn't give many good ideas.

7 No. The staff of the Center doesn't want our opinions and ideas.

8 Yes. The staff and the Director need our ideas and opinions because Head Start was established to be a cooperative effort between parents and staff. Without us, the Program couldn't stay in operation.

Obviously, the way parents would answer these questions is a matter of opinion and will change from community to community. If you circled answers 1, 2, 4 and 8, you might be right for your community. But for most communities, the parents would give answers like 3, 5, 6 and 7. In other words, most parents said "No" to the question.

If parents don't think their participation is really necessary, will they participate? We don't think so. But if they felt they could really do something for the Program and that the staff really wanted them — would they participate then? We think they would.

This means that if you are to have parent involvement, you will need to help the parents to:

> really learn something they feel they need to know
> or to really benefit from parent involvement; and
> feel that their contribution to the Center is <u>important, necessary and wanted</u>.

There is one more thing you can do. This has to do with the third principle we looked at before:

3. Parents are adults and must be treated like adults. They do not like to sit around in meetings if they don't think they are useful, if they don't think they can contribute anything, if they are uncomfortable — physically or emotionally — and if they feel that they are being treated like children.

Does your Center ever violate or ignore this third principle? Here are some things to look for.

1. Does it ask parents to come to meetings where there are only little children's chairs or desks to sit on?
2. Does it have parents come to meetings where the room is too large, too cold, too hot, or where it is difficult to hear what's being said?
3. Does it have parents come to meetings where they are asked to talk about nothing very important — only things like who will bake cookies or who will drive the cars on the next field trip?
4. Does it ask parents to come to meetings where the only thing that happens is a training session about how to sit in meetings — for example, if the only thing that happened was a training session on Robert's Rules of Order.

There are lots of Programs which do these things. And there are many more ways a Program can violate this third principle — can you think of some from your own experience? The next time one of your Head Start Centers is planning a meeting, it might be a good idea to look at it carefully to see if it is violating any one of these three principles. You might ask some other staff members to do this with you.

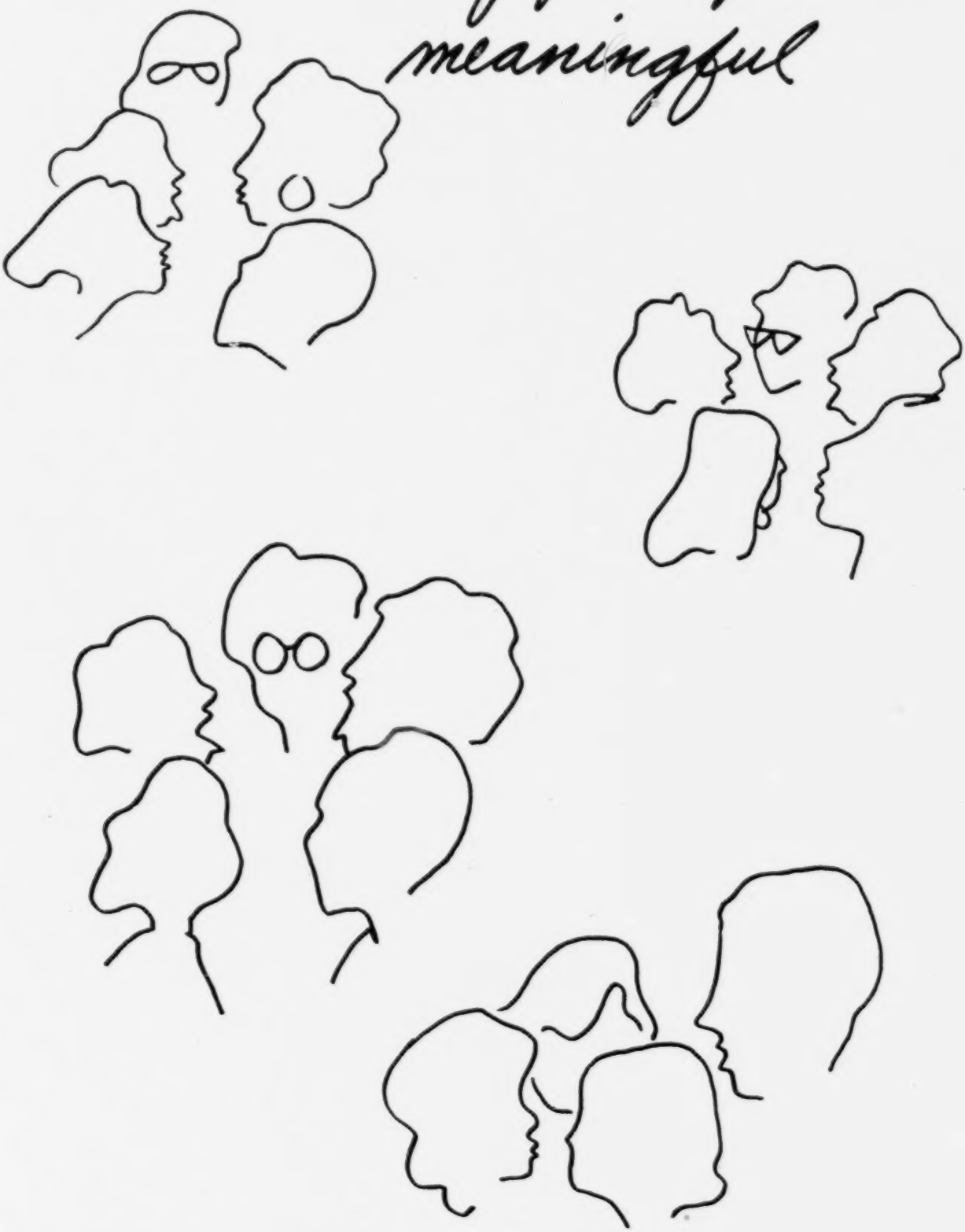
We've now looked at the three basic principles of parent involvement and what they mean. In the next chapters we will begin looking at ways:

A. To help parents to have a good experience, to feel that they or their children can be better off because of their involvement;

B. To help parents to see how they can participate and that their participation is important and necessary to the Head Start Program;

C. To help parents feel comfortable and treated like adults during their meetings.

III making participation meaningful



your job is getting parents involved. Our first chapter presented some principles for parent involvement -- things you must remember as you go about your daily job. But what should that daily job be, exactly? Principles and ideas are fine, but what do you do on a day-to-day basis to get parent involvement? This chapter will present a system and with specific suggestions for day-to-day work.

When you begin to plan for parent involvement, you will need to think about two things:

1. The content -- what parents can have a voice in, the areas in which they can make decisions, or the kinds of activities they might do together.

2. The process – how parents can participate and the ways they do it -- in other words, monthly meetings, weekly meetings, mail votes, and so on. You might call this the 'vehicle' for participation. For, just as your car is your vehicle for getting to the supermarket, you must have a vehicle for getting to total parent involvement.

SETTING UP THE VEHICLE FOR PARTICIPATION -- THE PROCESS

Let's look now at the process or vehicle of parent participation.

Whenever you decide to go to the supermarket, you start looking for some way to get there. You have several alternatives -- your own car if you have one, a friend's car, a bus, or even a taxi. Of course, you want to find the quickest, most convenient, or most enjoyable method available to you.

Usually, you don't give much thought to a problem like this. You figure it out quickly --- almost subconsciously. You're usually thinking about what you want to buy when you get to the market, instead. But, if getting to the market was really difficult, you would have to spend much more time deciding how to do it. And you would probably go a lot less often.

One of the biggest problems with parent participation is that we spend all our time thinking about what we want to do with the parents or what we would like them to do and too little time helping them to find a 'vehicle' with which to do it. This would be like spending all our time planning our shopping list and forgetting to plan how we will get to the store. So, the parents are left stranded. They know they are supposed to do something, but they don't know how to do it, or exactly what to do. Or the ways that are open to them don't seem to work.

You're probably wondering if that is true for your Agency. Maybe you're thinking, "We could have participation if the parents would only come to our meetings." Let's examine this statement.

Parent participation means that at least one parent from each household should be involved in the curriculum and activities of the Center. All Centers would like to have both parents as much as possible. For most Centers that means 30 to 100 parents or more!

Suppose 50 parents did come to a meeting. How many could participate meaningfully in an hour-and-a-half or two hours? How much debate could there be? How much work and decision-making could get done?

Very little! All of us know that meetings are a very difficult way to do business, study issues, and make decisions. It takes great skill and much planning to make a large meeting work. What is the maximum size meeting in which you think you can do productive work? We would say 3 to 5 people. Certainly, no more than 8 to 10.

Now let's look at how parents are usually asked to participate. Look at the 'vehicle' we use for participation in most Agencies. It is a monthly meeting which all parents are asked to attend. Often it is held far from their homes, and at night when many are tired from a hard day's work. The meeting usually takes place in children's classrooms where the only place to sit is on small children's chairs.

Of course only a few parents come. There will always be some who will participate because they like the chance to socialize with their friends or because they want to help you. But most will simply say, "The heck with it:" We're not going to get anything done anyway, so let's do something else tonight."

Why do they react this way? Let's remember one of our principles: parents will participate when they believe it is worthwhile and when they believe they can accomplish something. They won't participate much when they don't believe they can do anything meaningful.

So, one big reason most Parent Involvement Programs have not worked is simply because they have not yet created an effective way for parents to participate. If you are going to have good parent participation, you must first set up a vehicle which will make it possible for parents to make a meaningful contribution. You can not do this by yourself. You will need the approval and support of your Head Start Director and all the staff. We will talk about that in later Chapters. Let's look first at a system for parent participation which will give parents a real opportunity to participate.

An Overview of the System

The next few pages will outline a completely new approach to parent involvement. You may find it less complicated and easier to understand if you have a picture of the total system before you begin.

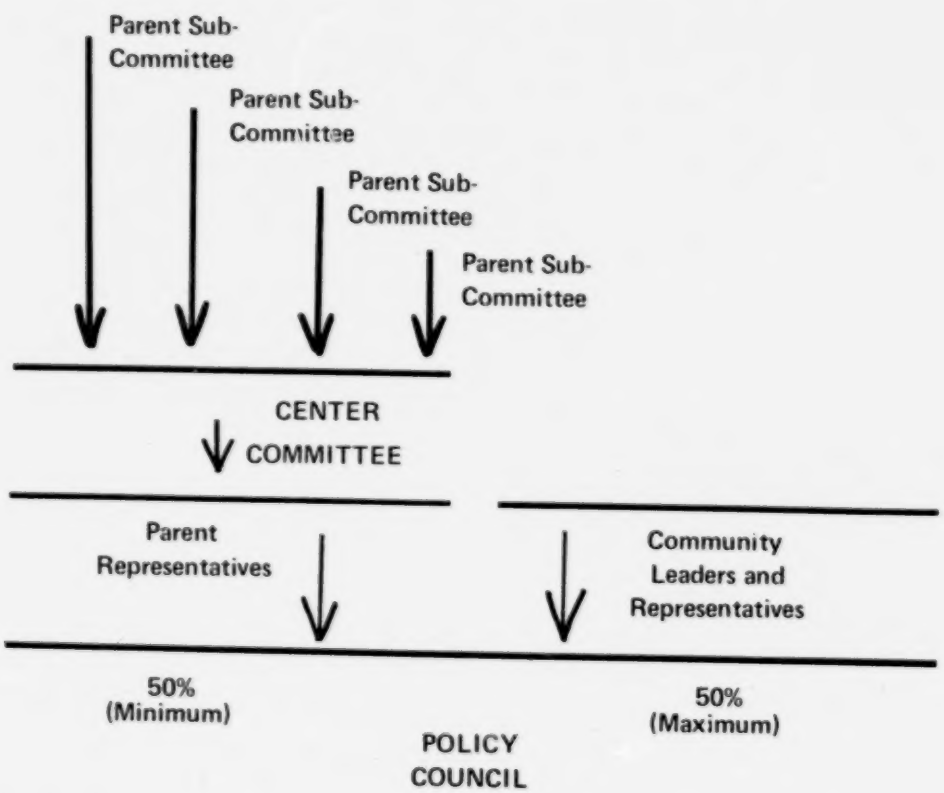
This program has 3 basic parts:

Parent Sub-Committees

The Center Committee

The Policy Council

A picture of these parts would look like the following:



What's different? The Parent Sub-Committee! A group consisting of all parents of a Center is too large for everyone to participate in at one time. If it can meet only once a month, many parents will be unable to attend on the one night chosen. For some --- perhaps a majority --- transportation will be difficult.

What would you do if someone gave you a piece of pie that was too big to eat? You'd cut it into smaller pieces. That's exactly what we're suggesting you do with your Center groups. Just as states and cities are divided into counties and precincts, so that more people can participate in choosing their government and making the laws --- your Head Start Centers can get more participation by dividing parents into smaller, more workable groups.

When individual parents feel a part of a smaller group who know each other, more will participate. When each parent feels he or she is in a group small enough for everyone's individual voice to be heard, more parents will participate. The essence of the plan you are about to look at is that every parent is a part of a small, local group of parents he or she knows well.

step one ORGANIZE PARENTS INTO LOCAL GROUPS

Who Is In It and How Many?

Your first step is to organize the parents of each of your Centers into small groups of between 5 and 8 parents. You can do this in one of two ways --- by geographic location or by classroom. If you are in a rural area, you may find it better to organize the parents who live closest together into small groups even though their children may be in different classrooms. If you are working with an urban program, you will probably find that it will be better to divide the parents by classroom.

Try to organize your groups so that the number does not exceed 10 parents. The best number is, of course, 5 to 7.

The typical Center will have between 5 and 9 of these small groups. These groups will be called Parent Sub-Committees.

Where the groups meet:

The Parent Sub-Committees will meet in places which are convenient for each group. Probably, each Parent Sub-Committee will want to meet at some member's house where they can be comfortable — but they might choose to use a local school, church, or other facility.

When the groups meet:

Each of the Parent Sub-Committees must meet at least once a month. They should try to meet between the first day and the tenth day of the month — for example, a group would meet at the time of its choice between the dates of January 1 and January 10.

What the groups do:

These will be the most basic groups for your Parent Involvement Program. They are the individual pieces of your "pie." In each of these groups the parents will discuss issues and questions relevant to the Head Start Program. For example, they will discuss such subjects as the staff, the budget, and special conditions of the grant, and will make recommendations for the Center Committee.

step two

SELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE CENTER COMMITTEE

Each Parent Sub-Committee will select two representatives to sit on the Head Start Center Committee. One of these parents will be the regular representative. The other will be an alternate. The alternate will attend Center Committee meetings whenever the chief representative cannot attend. The regular representative for the Center Committee may also be the Chairman of his Parent Sub-Committee. Of course, any parent may attend at any time; but the Parent Sub-Committee representatives or the alternates must promise to attend.

step three HOLD A MEETING OF THE CENTER COMMITTEE

Who Is On It and How Many:

The Center Committee will now be composed of the representatives selected by the Parent Sub-Committees. It will usually have between 12 and 20 members depending on how big your Head Start Program is and how many Parent Sub-Committees have been formed.

Where the Center Committee Meets:

The Center Committee probably will want to meet at the Head Start Center or wherever your Center Committee has been regularly meeting.

When the Center Committee Meets:

The Center Committee will meet between the 11th and the 20th day of each month. For example, in January it would meet some time between January 11 and January 20.

What the Center Committee Does:

The duties and responsibilities of the Center Committee were described briefly in Chapter II. They are described in detail in the Head Start Policy Manual. The Center Committee must do all of the things we have said are its duties in this manual. In a later Chapter we will show you how you can help the Center Committee to fulfill all its responsibilities.

steps four SELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE POLICY COUNCIL

During the first meeting, the Center Committee must select at least two representatives to the Policy Council. Both of these representatives may attend each of the Policy Council meetings or they might decide to have one person be the regular representative and the other person be the alternate.

steps five THE POLICY COUNCIL MEETS

Who Is On It:

The rule for determining the membership of the Policy Council is 50%-50%. The Council is composed of at least 50% representatives of the parents of the Head Start Centers and no more than 50% representatives of the community. The parent representatives, as we have said, are chosen by the Center Committee. The community representatives might include business, school, and government officials of the community. They might also include one or two people from the Community Action Agency Board of Directors.

Where the Policy Council Meets:

The members of the Policy Council will decide where the Council should meet --- or the Chairman may decide. Probably, the Council will meet at the Community Action Agency, if it has a conference room.

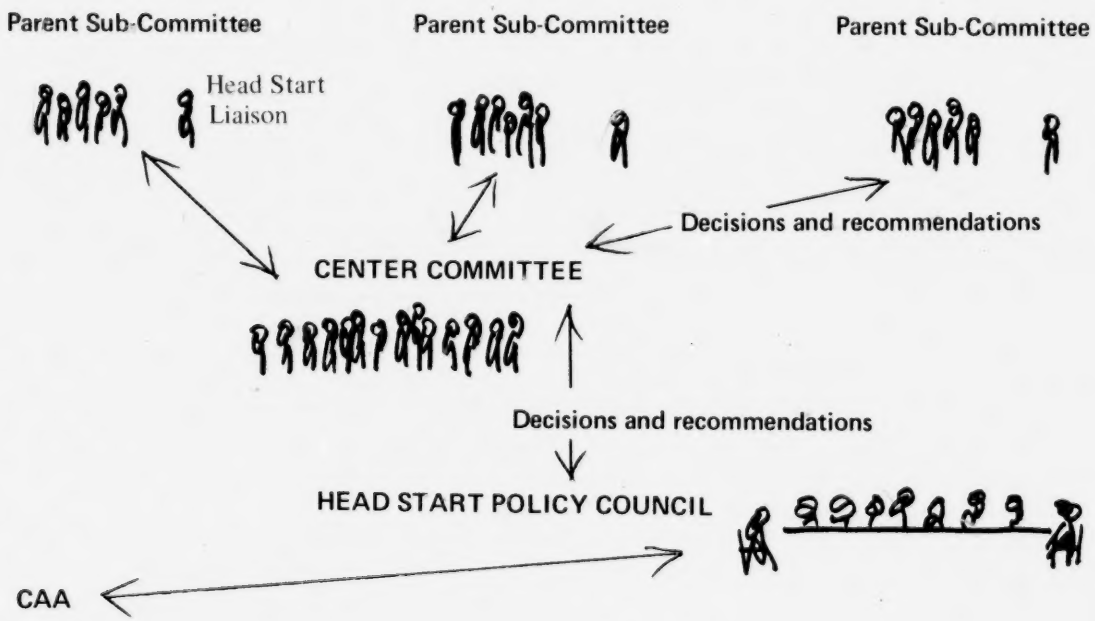
When the Policy Council Meets:

The Policy Council will meet between the 21st and 31st day of each month. Now you can see the complete schedule for the meetings of all the groups. It goes like this.

Between January 1 - 10	Parent Sub-Committees Meet
Between January 11 - 20	Center Committee Meets
Between January 21 - 31	Policy Council Meets

Let's review all the pieces of the structure we have formed. You have divided all the parents of the Head Start Program into small groups called Sub-Committees. These groups meet in the first 10 days of each month and make recommendations and decisions about their Head Start Program. After all these groups have met, their representatives attend a Center Committee Meeting held between the 11th and the 20th day of the month. At this meeting, the representatives of all the parents get to make their recommendations and decisions based on the meetings they have had in individual Parent Sub-Committees. Finally, after the Center Committee has met, the Policy Council will meet during the last 10 days of the month and make their recommendations and decisions based on the recommendations that have come to them through the Center Committee and the Parent Sub-Committees.

It sounds a little complicated. Perhaps this diagram will help make it clearer.



WHY THIS WAY?

You have just completed one of the most difficult parts of this manual. You may find you have to read it carefully more than once before it is completely clear.

This plan is based on some assumptions about people — when they will best participate in group activities and under what circumstances. You can test whether you agree with these assumptions by answering the following simple quiz:

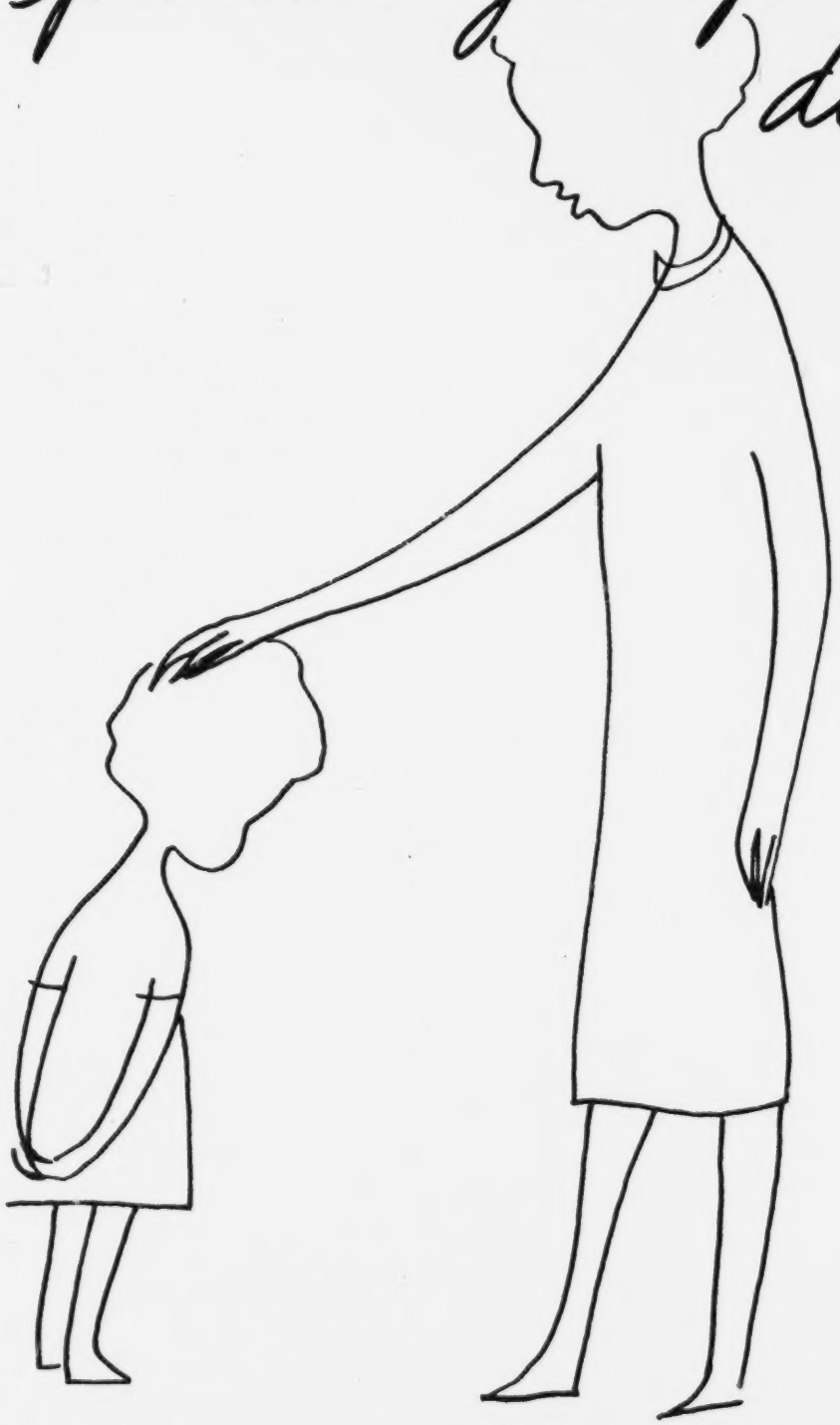
Instructions:
Circle T if you think the statement is true, and F if you think it's false.

1. People are most likely to participate freely in groups in which they know the other members well.	T	F
2. People are most likely to participate freely in groups in which they have a chance to make their point and explain it.	T	F
3. When groups become larger than 8 or 10 people, it is often extremely difficult to talk freely or to have good, informal discussions.	T	F
4. When people can meet in comfortable, familiar circumstances, they are more likely to participate in a group's business.	T	F
5. Individuals are most likely to get really involved and interested in a group when they believe that they personally can have an impact on the group.	T	F
6. To have effective participation, it is necessary to divide groups of people into small enough units so that individuals feel that their participation is meaningful and "makes a difference."	T	F

Did you circle that all these statements are true? If so, you agree with the assumptions behind this approach. Generally speaking, each of these statements is true. If you believe that some are false, perhaps you are thinking of a particular instance which, for some particular reason, is an exception. Or perhaps you should stop and re-examine some of your ideas about groups. Try to think about the times when you have found it easiest and most productive to participate in a group. Then think about some of the times when you have found it most difficult to participate -- or least satisfying.

Now if you go back and read the questions again as statements, you will see that these are 6 basic reasons why we believe you must divide the parents in your community into Parent Sub-Committees of less than 10 members in order to have effective parent participation.

IV what the parent groups do



making PARTICIPATION MEANINGFUL

In Chapter III, we observed that to get meaningful parent involvement, you must think about two things:

1. The content of the involvement — what parents can have a voice in, the areas in which they can make decisions, the kinds of things the different parent groups can do.
2. The process — how parents can participate and the ways they can do it.

In the last chapter we studied the process or the vehicle for parent involvement. This chapter will present the same concepts and tools to help you with the content.

THE PARENT GROUPS — WHAT THEY DO

The structure that we have recommended in this manual describes three groups that form the parent involvement structure for the Head Start Program.

These three groups each have some unique functions or special things they can do. You will want to take advantage of these possibilities.

One unique role of the Sub-committee is that it can be the group that helps staff and parents share information. In this group for example, parents can learn what is being taught and how to follow through at home. They can help staff by sharing information about their children that staff could use to plan for and teach them. In Chapter VIII you will see how you can get the staff to

develop some lists. You might use such a list to make this group a meaningful link in the parent involvement program.

The Center Committee has several unique functions. One is to be the place where parents can talk about the things that affect the Head Start Center and the Community which it serves -- things like how to raise money for special needs in the center, interviewing staff for positions, planning parent night programs on special subjects, and having discussions with the public schools in the community about the needs of the children.

This group is also the funnel for information to the parents. For instance, this group should learn about what is happening with the Policy Council and report that to the separate Parent Sub-Committees. It also is where the Policy Council representatives learn what the special concerns of the parents are and pass those on to the Policy Council. Finally, according to the Head Start guidelines, each Center Committee has some formal duties to perform for its Center.

The special function of the Policy Council is to provide a formal structure through which parents can participate in the policy-making and operation of the program. This group has the greatest formal power. Its job is to represent the wishes and feelings of the parents.

If you are going to help these different groups to carry out their responsibilities, you will probably want to develop some kind of "flow chart" of their duties, roles, and also of the times when they must do certain things.

Here is an example of such a chart:

SUGGESTED METHOD FOR PLANNING
FOR EACH GROUP IN STRUCTURE

month / dates / groups / task of program

1	1st 10 days	Sub-Committee	Form, select Center Committee representatives. Meet staff of Center. Discuss questions about children. Set volunteer calendar. Discuss any special conditions on grant that the Policy Council will be acting upon.
	2nd 10 days	Center Committee	Select Policy Council representatives. Discuss reports of Sub-Committee. Make recommendations to Policy Council on action taken to comply to special conditions. Set some goals for center activities or parent programs.
	3rd 10 days	Policy Council	Select officers, make decisions about special conditions. Hear Center reports. Discuss desired community representation.
2	1st 10 days	Sub-Committee	Review Policy Council minutes. Discuss ideas for Center-wide parent program. Share first month in Head Start experience of children. Suggest community representatives for Policy Council.
	2nd 10 days	Center Committee	Discuss reports of Sub-Committees, make recommendations to Policy Council on action taken to comply with special conditions. Finalize parent program night plans. Recom- community representatives to Policy Council.
	3rd 10 days	Policy Council	Take action on special conditions. Review Center Committee reports. Decide on community representatives. Hear staff reports on progress of program to date.

etc.

This is just a sample chart. In Appendix A, you will find a more detailed chart of each group's responsibilities for an entire year. Naturally, you must adapt these charts and timetables to your programs particular needs and schedules.

> It is very important that you make some kind of flow chart. Without it, you can almost be sure that some part of your program or timetable will get lost.

HOW THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR RELATES TO THE PARENT GROUPS

We haven't said much about how you should behave or what your specific role with these groups should be. We won't. You must decide what is appropriate for your program. But we can give you some help in thinking about your role.

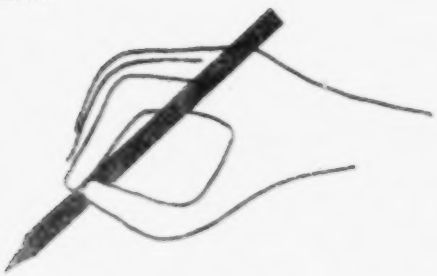
As a parent involvement coordinator, you will find that you are often asked to help others develop program ideas and respond to guidelines established for your child development program. You know there are many ways you can assist depending upon how closely involved you can or want to be. For example, you could take over and direct the process by telling others what to do and what information they need. Or you might simply act as a "parent consultant" helping others to think through what they are doing.

With most parent groups, you will be one of the most expert people with whom the parent comes in contact. For this reason, the role you choose may often be decisive in determining whether the parent program is weak or strong. You must decide what role is important. Generally, the role you choose will be that of "parent consultant."

The "parent consultant" role requires that you maintain a delicate balance between being too involved and not involved enough.

What do we mean by "too involved"? The answer to this question will vary from community to community and perhaps from program to program; but here's a way you can check your degree of involvement.

Quickly, mark your reactions to these questions.



1. Do parents refer to the parent program as
   a. yours b. theirs?
2. Do parents express their own ideas when planning the program or do they rely on you for the information?
   a. yours b. theirs
3. When work is to be done, do parents look to you or do they take the responsibility themselves?
   a. you b. they
4. When there is writing to be done, meeting announcements, letters to other agencies, etc. who does the writing?
   a. you b. they
5. Do parents feel your ideas are better and more creative than theirs?
   a. yours b. theirs

Your answers should give you some idea of your involvement. Is it what you prefer?

What on the other hand are the things that would suggest to you the need for more involvement? Again, answers vary, but there are ways to determine "too little" involvement. Mark your answers to these statements.

1. Parents feel you are just a "staff person" for whom they must produce information and you do not understand why the information is needed.
   A. True B. False
2. You do not really understand why parent involvement is an important part of any child development program.
   A. True B. False
3. You do not understand what needs parent involvement will meet in the community.
   A. True B. False
4. You cannot talk to the parent leadership openly with trust and candor.
   A. True B. False

Were most of your answers "True"? If so, you may be in a position for which you are not suited.

The parent involvement coordinators role as we have described it allows you to create a partnership between the parents and staff of the child development center. This partnership is not entirely equal. In some respects, you have the power to say 'yes' or 'no'. Your actions have great significance and impact with the parent groups. This means you will want to be very careful to insure that "what you want is what you get." In other words, you want to be sure the parents see you the way you want to be seen.

helpful hints

Here are some helpful hints which may insure that you are perceived in the way you want to be. It is helpful if . . .

You behave in ways that enable parents and staff working with you to trust you and to be critical of you.

You allow yourself to be influenced as well as influence others in the program.

Work with others on explorations of program as well as problem solving.

Listen and convey an impression of real concern and understanding of what parents are saying to you.

Reduce any threat you may give to people you are working with.

Try to test occasionally whether what you are doing is perceived as really helpful.

Remember, help is not help if the person getting it doesn't feel helped.

Don't re-invent the wheel. Offer your expertise when appropriate.

IT IS NOT HELPFUL IF . . .

You always tell parents and staff what to do.

You take advantage of your position to show how knowledgeable, expert and experienced you are.

You meet defensiveness with pressure and argument about the facts. This usually increases defensiveness and decreases the possibility of "leveling" between the helper and the persons or groups being helped.

V the parent sub-committee

how to organize it
what it can and should do

DIVIDING THE PARENTS BY CLASSROOM OR GEOGRAPHY

Your first decision must be whether you will divide the parents in your program by classroom or geography. If possible, you should try and divide them by classroom. Here is why.

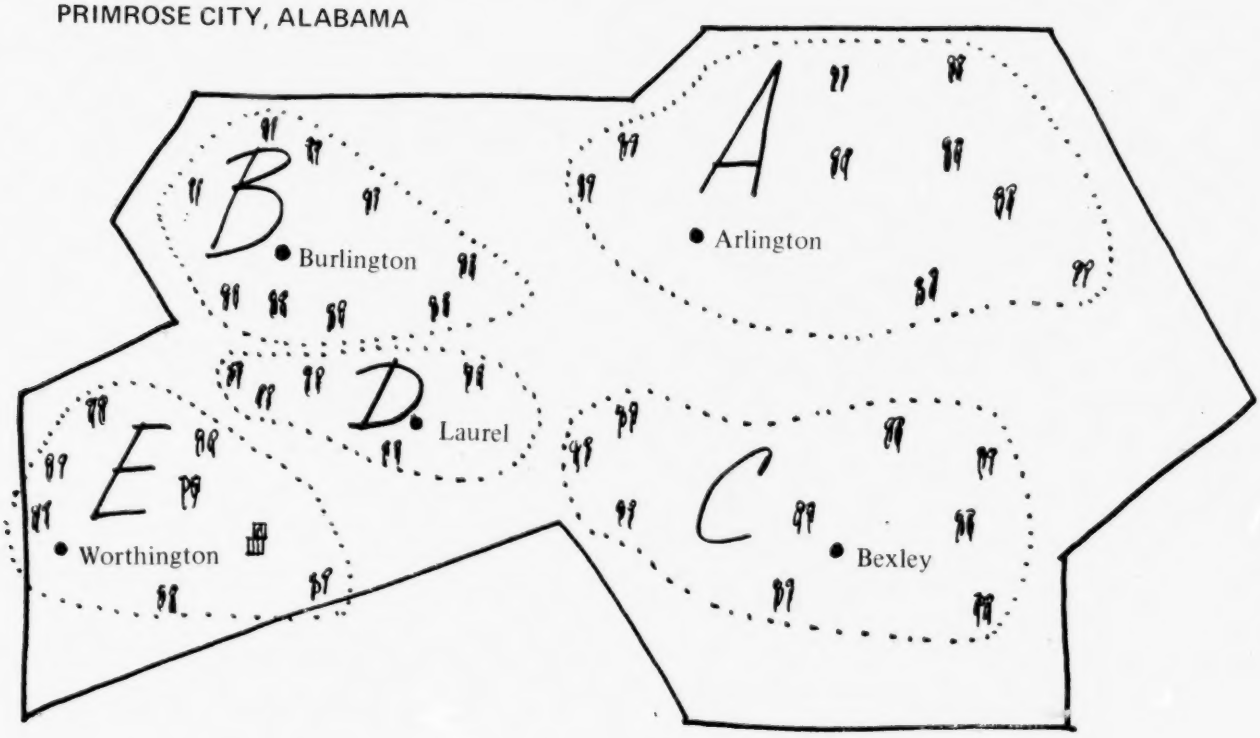
1. Parents who are divided by classroom will have children who all have the same teachers and aides.
2. Parents who are divided by classroom will have children who are all receiving the same curriculum.
3. Because parents who are divided by classroom will have children who are receiving the same curriculum and who have the same teachers and aides, they will have more issues, concerns, and questions in common.

But how do you decide? Your first concern must be for the convenience of the parents. If they must drive long distances to a meeting or if they must take long bus rides (particularly in the evening), they will not be as likely to come to meetings. They will certainly want to schedule fewer meetings.

Therefore, in rural areas you may find it is better to help the parents to form sub-committees based on geographic location

FIGURE I

PRIMROSE CITY, ALABAMA



● = Villages

= Head Start Center

= Parents

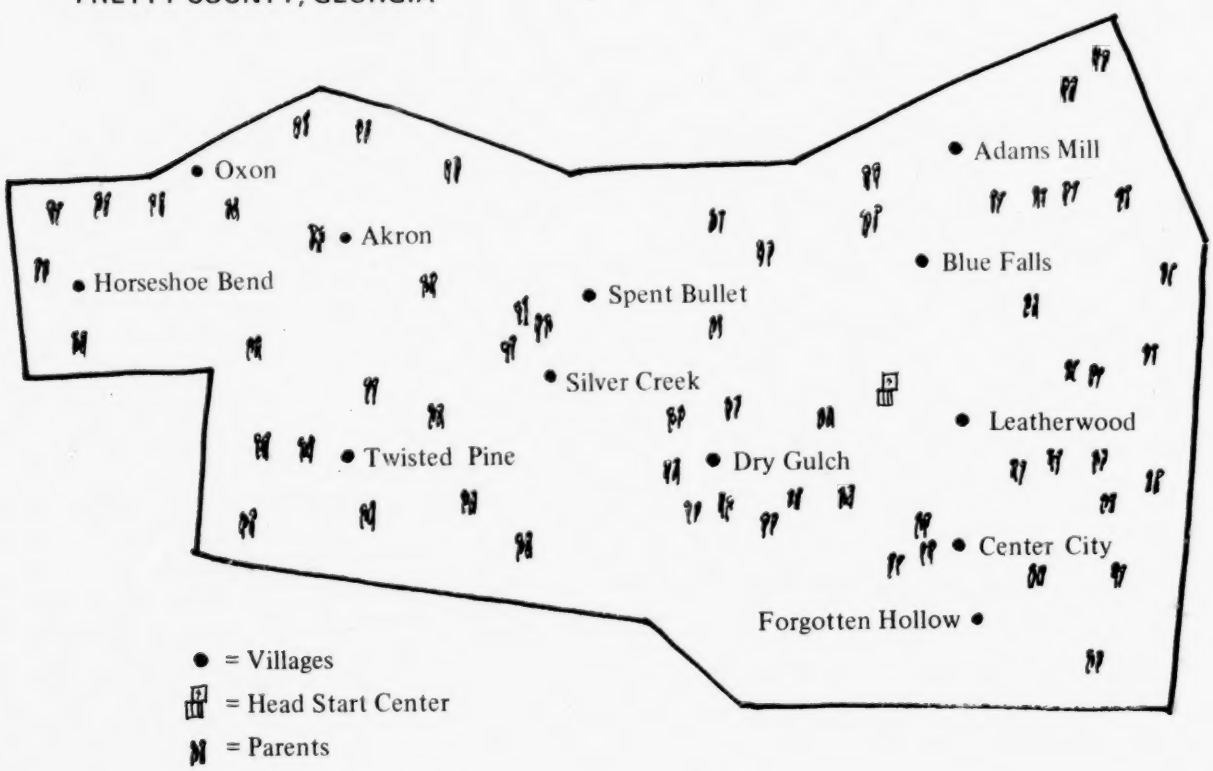
To give you an example of what we mean, the above, Figure IV-1 is a map of a rural county with a Head Start program. In this case parents are scattered throughout the county. It would not make much sense to organize them by classrooms. But it would be possible to organize five sub-committees by geography. According to this map, you would have the following five sub-committees:

Sub-Committee A --- Arlington Sub-Committee
Sub-Committee B --- Burlington Sub-Committee
Sub-Committee C --- Bexley Sub-Committee
Sub-Committee D --- Laurel Sub-Committee
Sub-Committee E --- Worthing Sub-Committee

Try your skill at "organizing" a county. Your imaginary Head Start Center is the Leatherwood Head Start Center. There are 64 children and two classrooms. How many sub-committees would you form? Using Figure IV-2, draw a line around the areas they would encompass.

FIGURE IV-2

PRETTY COUNTY, GEORGIA



1. How many sub-committees did you form?
2. What were their names (by most central village)?

For your information we will share with you how we divided up the parents of Pretty County, Georgia.

FIGURE IV-3

As you can see, we felt 7 Parent Sub-Committees would give the best distribution and representation.

Of course, there is no "right way." And you would have to use your own best judgment in making these kinds of divisions for your community. But there are some important points to keep in mind:

1. Never let a group become larger than 10 if you can possibly avoid it. Remember your divisions are by household anyway; so, if both parents in three or four families decided to attend a meeting that would double the group's size.
2. There is no set number of parents who may attend beyond the general recommendations of no more than 10 and no fewer than 4. Thus, depending on your community you might help set up Sub-Committees of 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9 parents.
3. Try to group your Sub-Committees around some central spot. A town, church, or general store would be an example.

BEFORE THE CENTER OPENS

You have decided the best way to divide up the parents in your community. Now you must inform the parents of your suggestions and help to see that the groups get formed.

The best time and the easiest time to do all this pre-planning is before the program begins. The following plan is based on this fact. BUT YOU CAN STILL FOLLOW MUCH OF THIS PLAN EVEN IF YOUR CENTER HAS OPENED.

Here is one word of caution which we will repeat. Before you contact any parents or begin to set up any meetings for parents, you must get the support of your Head Start Director, the Education Director, and the staff. We will talk specifically about how you can get that support in Chapters VII and VIII.

But first, the parents. Let us show you a sample orientation for parents. If you read this carefully, it will help you in two ways:

1. It will give you ideas about how to tell parents about your program.
2. It will help you to understand the system better by showing you some of the things parents will want to know.

step one

ASSEMBLE THE PARENTS ON OPENING DAY FOR 2½ HOURS

On the opening day, at least one parent of each of the children in the Center must come to the Head Start Center. This is a time when you will have all parents together. This is also a time when the parents will be most interested and most prepared to learn about the Center. You will need at least 2-1/2 hours to accomplish your orientation to the Parent Involvement Program. So, Step 1 is to assemble all parents in a single room and to be sure that you have 2-1/2 hours.

step two

PRESENT BRIEF LECTURE ON PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Probably most of the parents will have no idea what Parent Involvement in Head Start is all about, or they will have only a vague idea. Therefore, you must provide them with a brief talk on what parent involvement will mean and in what kinds of things parents are expected to take an active part. You must also describe briefly the different groups which will be established for parent participation and how they work. Your presentation will probably be more effective if you have also prepared some "flip charts"* or newsprint which you can point to as you talk.

You may feel that you are not the best person to give this talk. Perhaps your Head Start Director would like to do it. Perhaps there is someone else on the staff of the Head Start program or even the Community Action Agency sponsoring your program who would be more appropriate. That may be all right. In such a case, however, it is important that the Parent Involvement Coordinator is introduced to the parents and that they know who you are.

** Flip Charts or "newsprint" are 24 inch by 36 inch sheets of paper that are purchased at most office supply stores.*

step three

ANSWER QUESTIONS PARENTS MAY HAVE ABOUT THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM.

At this time some parents may want to question you about what you have said. Or they may have other questions about their relationship to the staff and the program. Of course, it would be helpful if some of the other staff --- particularly the Director --- were present during this question and answer period. Whether other staff are present or not, however, here are some hints about how to make such a session go as smoothly as possibly:

If you don't know the answer, say "I don't know." Don't make up answers. Take the person's name, say that you will try and get an answer and then get back in touch. Then be sure to get back in touch even if only to say that you can't get an answer.

Be open to criticism! If a parent seems critical or doubtful, listen carefully to his or her point of view. Ask for suggestions if appropriate and say that these will be taken into consideration. Avoid arguments!

step four

HAND OUT PREPARED LIST OF PARENT SUB-COMMITTEES

After the question-and-answer period, hand out a list to each of the parents of all the Sub-Committees and the names of the parents on each Committee.

You will probably find that for some reason there will be parents whose names are not on the list. Try to put them in the appropriate Sub-Committee at this time if it is clear where they belong. Or ask them to find their nearest neighbor on the list and join his or her Sub-Committee. Or, if neither of these is possible, take the names and addresses of those who are not assigned and tell them to meet with you immediately following the session. Then work out an appropriate assignement. Be sure to get them quickly into one of the groups that is meeting, as shown in Step 5.

step five

ASK THE SUB-COMMITTEES TO FORM RIGHT THERE INTO SEPARATE GROUPS OR CIRCLES

This will take a few minutes, as the parents attempt to learn who else is in their Committee and to group themselves.

Each Parent Sub-Committee should be assigned one staff member from the Center. If you have divided the parents by classroom, then the appropriate staff member would be the teacher or aide working with the children of those parents. If you have divided the parents by location, then you may assign the Staff Liaison to the Parent Sub-Committees at random or on a geographic basis --- in other words, having staff members work with the groups nearest their homes.

Note: The Staff members assigned to each group must point out to the parents that staff have no vote or influence in the group. They are there to advise and help out only and the parents must feel free to ask them not to attend or to meet without them if for any reason they want to do that. Chapter VII talks in more detail about this point.)

step six

GIVE THE SUB-COMMITTEES THE FOLLOWING TASKS TO DO RIGHT THERE

A. Introduce one another, learn where each other lives, how many children they have in the Center of what ages, where and what hours they work, etc.

B. Arrange for a time when everyone present can meet each month. Remember that the sub-committees must meet between the first and tenth days of each month — for example, between September 1 and 10, October 1 and 10, etc.

C. Arrange for a place which is convenient to all members. This could be a church, a school, or even the home of one of the parents in the group.

D. Arrange for a temporary chairman. This parent will be the person responsible for getting messages to the other parents in the sub-committee and the person you will talk to regarding the sub-committee until a permanent chairperson has been selected.

E. Ask each group to plan to report to the total group the results of this brief meeting.

F. If the Staff Liaisons (the staff member assigned to each group) are present, ask each group to discuss the role of the Staff Liaison.

step seven

ASK EACH GROUP TO REPORT

Be sure to record the date, time, and place each group has agreed upon for its next and regular meeting.

step eight

HAND-OUT ANY NECESSARY MATERIALS

Parents are asked to participate in the development of budgets, to help comply with any Special Conditions of the grant, and to be familiar with various aspects of the program. It might be appropriate at this point to give out copies of the work program, the grant, the budget, and Head Start Policy Manual, 70.2 for future discussion.

step nine

WRAP-UP LECTURE

Close this session with a review of the purposes of each group. Be sure to point out that each of the groups must select one representative and one alternate for the Center Committee. Discuss some of the functions of the Center Committee and the Policy Council.

You may also want to advise each of the group's who its specific Staff Liaison will be, if you have not been able to arrange to have the appropriate staff members present during your orientation. It would be appropriate also to state briefly how the Staff Liaison can help the groups and what he or she can and cannot do.)

step ten

FOLLOW-UP

Now is the point when you really become a Parent Involvement Coordinator. Your next steps must be to assure that these meetings happen. This is one of the most crucial times in your program. It is essential that these first meetings happen. The only way they will happen is if you do a lot of follow-up work.

You have your own style; and you will develop a follow-up plan to suit your own style, the size of your program, and your resources. Here is a general plan, however, which might save you some time or give you some ideas.

1. Develop a calendar for the sub-committee meetings.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Sept. 25	Sept. 26	Sept. 27	Sept. 28	Sept. 29
Oct. 2	Oct. 3 7:30 PM Arlington Sub-Comm. 7:30 PM Worthington Sub-Comm.	Oct. 4 8:00 PM Bexley Sub-Comm.	Oct. 5	Oct. 6
Oct. 9	Oct. 10 7:30 PM Laurel Sub-Comm.	Oct. 11 8:30 PM Burlington Sub-Comm.	Oct. 12	Oct. 13

2. Next, write in your calendar a reminder to notify the parents and the Staff Liaison 3 days in advance and be sure all still agree to attend. (You may find you have to do some hard persuading of a few of the parents at this point.)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Sept. 25	Sept. 26	Sept. 27	Sept. 28 Remind Arlington and Worthington Parents and Staff Liaison	Sept. 29
Oct. 2 Remind Bexley Parents and Staff Liaison	Oct. 3 7:30 PM Arlington Sat. Comm. 7:30 PM Worthington Sat. Comm.	Oct. 4 8:00 PM Bexley Sat. Comm.	Oct. 5 Remind Laurel Parents and Staff Liaison	Oct. 6
Oct. 9 Remind Burlington Parents and Staff Liaison	Oct. 10 7:30 PM Laurel Sat. Comm.	Oct. 11 8:30 PM Burlington Sat. Comm.	Oct. 12	Oct. 13

What is your opinion? Is it really necessary to contact each parent 3 days before these first meetings? If so, is it better to remind each parent in person, by phone, or by a mailed notice? Which would be the least likely to make a difference, if any?

Why did you answer the way you did?

_____

_____

_____

Experience with this kind of organization suggests that the most effective way to insure attendance is to see each parent in person or at least talk to each parent on the telephone. Mailed notices are ignored or not even read.

What about the question of whether you should spend your time this way. This will require a lot of time and effort on your part. Is it worth it? Why do it?

Remember, this will be the first meeting of the parents. When they were at the Center on opening day, they agreed to this meeting. But a lot was happening that day. Once they got home some forgot about it. Things came up and others got busy. Some may have thought about it and decided it wasn't a good idea.

So, your job is to be reminder, persuader, scolder or what-have-you. You may even have to help arrange transportation for some parents. And if you can contact all the parents in advance of this meeting, you will help increase the attendance greatly. You will also show (and this is one of the most important things you could do) that your Head Start Center cares about these meetings.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARENT SUB-COMMITTEES

Now, let's examine what the parents might do during the first meeting. There are some important items of business which must be transacted. You can help insure that this is done by preparing a typed agenda in advance of the meeting. You can give copies of this agenda to the temporary "chairman" or to the Staff Liaisons who will attend the meetings.

Here are some of the items which must appear on the agenda.

a. Selection of a Chairman

b. Selection of a representative to the Center Committee

c. Selection of an alternate representative to the Center Committee

d. Discussion and tentative agreement about the general items of concern and interest to the Parent Sub-Committee --- in other words, the kinds of areas and interests the parents would like to discuss and investigate during the next several months. (These may change throughout the year and need not be "permanent.")

Let us give you a suggestion which could make these meetings even more productive:

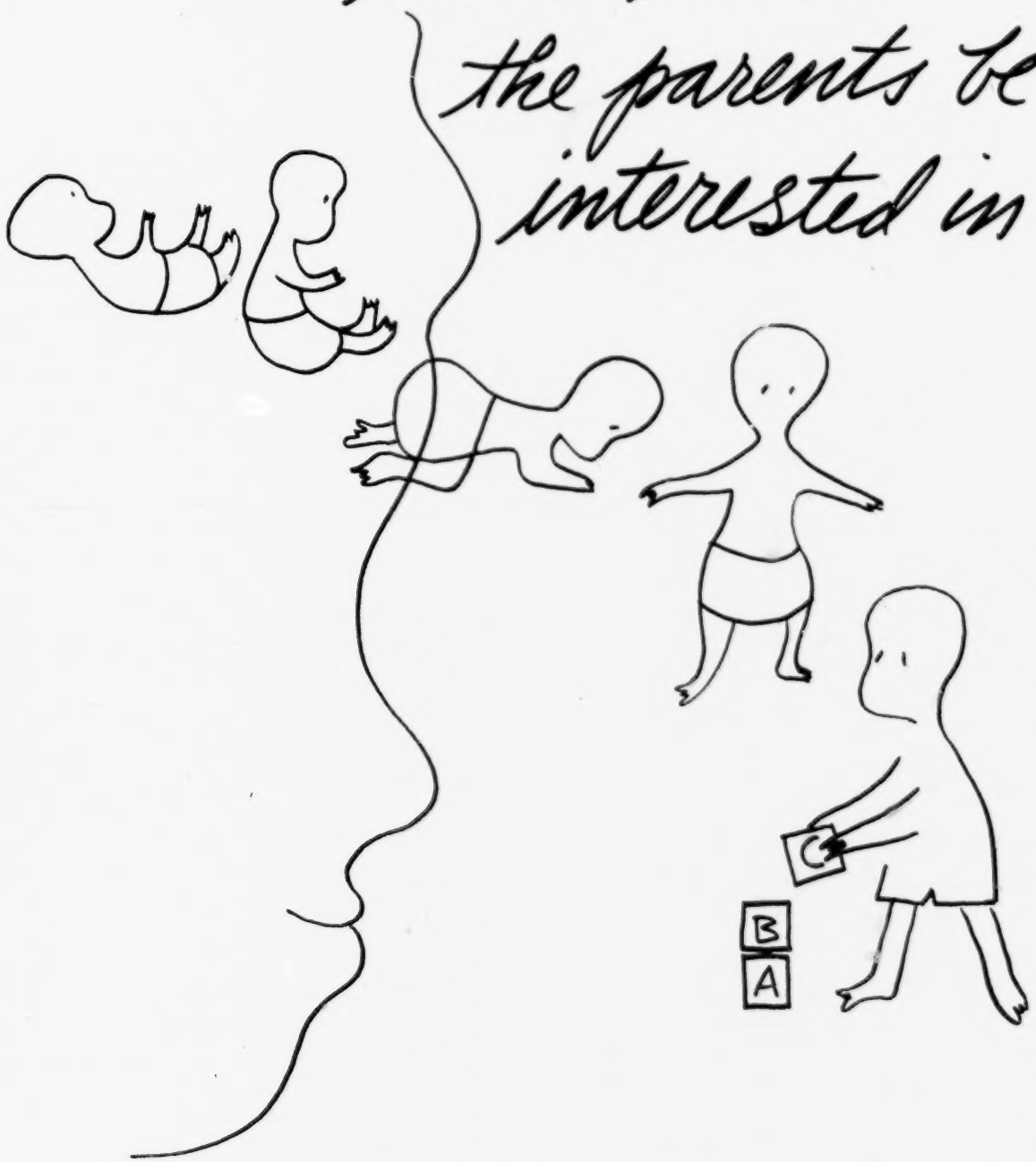
Be sure that each staff liaison knows about and plans to attend the Parent Sub-Committee meetings.

Before the Parent Sub-Committee meets, assemble all the staff who will act as liaisons --- those who will attend the Parent Sub-Committee meetings --- and conduct a review of two things:

1. The purpose of the Parent Sub-Committees and what they can and should do; and
2. The job of the Staff Liaison. Be sure all staff are aware that they can only advise and help. They cannot vote on decisions; they cannot tell the parents how to vote; and they can have no official function.

What can you tell the staff about the kinds of things the Parent Sub-Committees should do? At this point let us turn to the question of what the Parent Sub-Committees can do and should do. We have now a good "vehicle" for parent participation. We have looked at a process for parent participation. Let's look at the content.

VI what would the parents be interested in?



what will they really talk about?

Parent Involvement Coordinators often say
What can we do to get the parents interested?
What about the Center and its Program will really interest parents?

Now that you've seen a structure which could get all the parents actively involved and participating in your program, you will want some ideas about how to help the parents use their groups most effectively.

What would interest parents most? Probably you are a parent. If not, you have known many parents. Test your own knowledge and memory by answering the following questions.

1. If a group of parents who didn't know each other well got together, they would probably talk about:
   (a) their jobs, (b) their children, (c) their parents, (d) politics, (e) none of these.
2. One thing all parents share in common is a concern for:
   (a) who the next President will be, (b) local community programs, (c) getting better jobs, (d) their children's welfare, (e) none of these.
3. Most parents of a Head Start Center would be interested in talking about:
   (a) problems their children and other children in the Center are having, (b) the Head Start Center budget, (c) Head Start Center staff, (d) the roles of the Policy Council, (e) who should serve on the CAA Board.
4. Parents would find a discussion of the Head Start Center's budget:
   (a) very boring, (b) not related to them, (c) very interesting.
5. Most parents would feel that the job of selecting staff is the responsibility of:
   (a) the Head Start Director, (b) the CAA Director, (c) the Policy Council, (d) the parents themselves, (e) the CAA Board of Directors.

People are unpredictable. You can not say definitely how they will react. But the following answers are most likely to be correct for most situations: (1) - b, (2) - d, (3) - a, (4) - b, (5) - a.

All these questions point up the central fact that the only things all parents in a Head Start Program have in common is their concern for their children. And if they believe their children are getting a quality experience, they are satisfied.

A parent is not likely to see the Headstart Center as a place to educate himself; he will see it as a place to educate his child. And most parents will participate in efforts they believe will help their children to have a better experience. Few parents will participate if they find that participation really means another name for teaching parents. Yet so much of the history of parent involvement efforts have been just that --- attempts on the part of Head Start Center staff to teach the parents --- sometimes things that aren't even related to their children. One Head Start Center, for example, gave a series of training sessions to all the parent groups on Robert's Rules of Order! This kind of approach you might call the Parent Education approach.

So, to get real parent involvement, you must help your Center get out of the Parent Education bag and back into the Child Development bag.

Look at this idea more closely. The following chart should point up what we mean.

Parents Find It Less Important	But the Head Start Center Has
To make decisions about who should be hired for the Center.	Told parents that the hiring of the staff is something in which they should participate.
To learn how to participate in Head Start Center meetings	Taught parents Robert's Rules of Order and other devices and ways to participate in meetings.
To make decisions about the curriculum	Told parents to review the curriculum and give their reactions
To learn how to develop curriculum or how to interpret the curriculum	Given parents instruction in how the curriculum is developed and how to interpret and follow the curriculum
To read grants, to interpret budgets, and to make program decisions.	Told parents they should know about the grant and should help make budget decisions.
To be asked to get into community development because they have a child in the Head Start Center.	Told parents that one of the chief benefits of the Center Committee and the Policy Council is as a body to bring about improvements in the community.

Before you say, "This isn't true, many of the parents I know are interested in those things" --- stop and think. Yes, some parents are interested. Those are the ones who will come to the Head Start Center meetings. They are the ones who will be most willing to help you. But unless your program is unusual, it has probably been very difficult to get most of the parents involved in your Center. That's because they haven't been interested in these kinds of things; it's because they haven't understood that what your Center has been asking them to do will help their children.

"OK," you say, "but the Head Start Policy Manual 70.2 says we have to do many of these things. We can't help that."

This is true. But the Head Start Policy Manual 70.2 doesn't say how to do it. And that's what we're concerned with here. Sure, you need to get parent participation in all phases of your Center including questions of budget, staffing, and even Special Conditions of the grant. But first you must get the parents' attention. You must get them interested. Let's look at a chart of some things that would really interest parents.

Parents do want	The Head Start Center could
To learn about any special problems their children have	Arrange to have teachers talk with the parents about the progress and problems of their children
learn where their children are unique and different and where they are just like other children	Arrange to have the teachers describe the behavior of the children they deal with and discuss what is normal, what is abnormal, what are "stages," etc.
To learn special "tips" and information related to their children's welfare	Arrange for special lectures, films, tapes, etc. about toys and other items safe for children, and mental and physical health, etc.
To be able to talk with someone if they feel their children have been mistreated	Arrange for parents to be able to talk with other parents and Head Start staff about any gripes or concerns they have
To be able to discuss and do something about any special problems they may have with regard to their children such as transportation, babysitting, etc.	Arrange for a meaningful parent group which can put pressure on Head Start Center staff, CAA staff, or which can work out special problems in their own way.

This list isn't complete. Part of your job with other parents and the other staff is to expand this list. In fact, you remember that one of the items of business in the agenda for the first Parent Sub-Committee meeting is for the parents to make a list of the things that would really interest them.

But it will never be enough to simply ask the parents what they would like to talk about. They will need your help and imagination. The point we want to underscore here is that to make your Parent Involvement Program a success, you must make parent involvement child-centered first.

Does this mean that the Head Start Center and the parent groups cannot be a vehicle for community development?

Absolutely not. It means that you must organize the parents first around issues that they all know they share in common and which are their first priority. After you have done this and the parents discover that they can have influence as a group, then they will be ready to look at other things they can do. In fact you may not have to give them any help. Many parent groups will begin getting into more and more, larger and larger issues of common concern.

In this chapter we've seen that the Head Start Center's Parent Involvement Program can focus on two broad concerns and objectives -- Community Development and Child Development. You have read that a Parent Involvement Program will be most likely to get off to a successful beginning if it concentrates first on Child Development and later focuses on Community Development concerns.

This is a difficult philosophy. Before we end this chapter, participate with us in an exercise which may help you to see the difference between these two objectives and will help you test how well you have understood these two concepts.

The following statements each represent either Community Development or Child Development objectives. If you believe the statement is a Community Development objective, draw a circle around "COMM". If you believe it is a Child Development objective, draw a circle around "CHILD".

1. The Head Start program will help parents to gain special knowledge and insights about their children's growth and behavior. COMM CHILD
2. The Head Start program will help the parents to form into a united group so that they may better their communities and families. COMM CHILD
3. The Head Start program will provide parents with an opportunity to approve the staff who will teach their children. COMM CHILD
4. The Head Start program will give the parents special assistance on what they can do at home to promote the child's growth and development. COMM CHILD
5. The Head Start program will provide local parents with an opportunity to become employees of the Center. COMM CHILD
6. The Head Start program will ask parents to assist with fund-raising efforts for the Center. COMM CHILD
7. The Center will provide parents with an opportunity to discuss differences in the growth and development of their children with other parents and teachers. COMM CHILD
8. Parents will be able to describe the differences they have observed in their children as a result of the Head Start program. COMM CHILD
9. Parents will have an opportunity to discuss and seek solutions for any special problems they are encountering with their children at home. COMM CHILD
10. Parents will be taught how lesson plans and curricula are developed and the reasons for the curricula. COMM CHILD

The answers are as follows: (1) CHILD, (2) COMM, (3) COMM, (4) CHILD, (5) COMM, (6) COMM, (7) CHILD, (8) CHILD, (9) CHILD, (10) COMM. Let's briefly review them.

1. Helping parents to gain knowledge and insights about their children is clearly a Child Development objective. The focus is directly on helping and learning more about the child.
2. Forming the parents into a united group for any purpose is primarily a Community Development objective. It might benefit the child enormously; but it is not an effort directly concerned with the child.
3. Approving the staff who will teach the children is also primarily a Community Development activity. It gives the parents a chance to make decisions about people who will affect their lives and the lives of their children. It does not contribute directly to greater knowledge about being a parent or about the children.
4. Of course, special assistance on what the parent can do at home to be more effective is a Child Development objective and activity.
5. The chance to become employees of the Center is a Community Development objective. It helps the community by providing employment. Indirectly, it should also help the children and help the parents to be better parents; but the key word here is indirectly.
6. Assisting with fund-raising efforts is also a Community Development activity. It does get the parents involved in the running and continuation of the Center; but like the last statement, it helps them only indirectly with the development of their children.
7. An opportunity to compare differences in the growth of their children directly with staff and other parents is very much a Child Development activity.
8. For parents to be made aware of the differences they have observed in their children as a result of Head Start is similarly a Child Development activity.
9. As with statement number 8, for parents to have an opportunity to discuss and seek solutions for special problems they are encountering with their children is directly a Child Development activity.

10. This is one of the most difficult. In our view, teaching parents about how lesson plans are formulated is not a Child Development activity. It is more a parent development activity, so we circled COMM. Our decision is based on the assumption that parents do not and will never become actively involved in the development of curricula. Furthermore, while there may be ways they can reinforce the curriculum at home, teaching them how and why it was formulated is not the best way to get reinforcement.

Now let's summarize what we have learned. Parent Involvement in the Head Start Center and programs may have two broad objectives. They may focus on Community Development or on Child Development.

The important point to keep in mind is you will probably be most successful if you begin your Parent Involvement Program by focusing chiefly on Child Development objectives. Then, after you have got your program firmly underway, you can begin to turn to Community Development objectives.

VII parent involvement and the Head Start Director

Parent Involvement Coordinators often say:

I can't get my Parent Involvement Program underway without the cooperation and support of my Director and how do I get that?

My Director doesn't seem to really care about parent involvement. How can I find out whether that's true; or, if that is true, what can I do?

These are good questions. You can't have meaningful parent involvement without the full cooperation and support of your Director. He or she must understand what you are doing and agree with it.

But what about the possibility that the Director doesn't really care about parent involvement?

First, we believe that almost all Directors want parent involvement -- if they can find a way to get it which doesn't disrupt their programs or which doesn't require an impossible amount of their time. And whether they want it or not, they have to have it. The Head Start Policy Manual says they must have it. (See Chapter II.)

Even if they must have parent involvement, many Directors are probably a little afraid of it. What are some of the reasons they might be afraid? Think of some reasons and jot your answers down here.

Did you skip that last exercise? If so, go back and spend a moment with it. It's important that you begin to get some understanding and sympathy for your Directors's problems if you are going to convince him to help you get a really good Parent Involvement Program going.

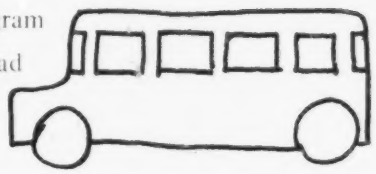
Now, let us share some of our ideas with you of why the Director could be uncertain about parent involvement and compare your responses with ours.

He/she might be afraid parents would make bad policy decisions.

Can you think of how this might happen? What about the hiring of staff? Are parents really qualified to know what kind of person would make the best Head Start teacher?

The Director might be afraid he would lose control of his program.

How could that happen? One example would be if the expenditure of budget items became a political issue in the community. If a group with little knowledge of the internal needs of a program tried to get money spent for a new bus, for example, instead of a television set.



The Director might be afraid he would have to spend too much time with parents or committees and wouldn't have enough time for the Head Start program.

The Director might be afraid that some of his staff would use parent groups to resist his direction or leadership.

The Director might not believe that effective parent involvement is possible.

And these are good worries. As Parent Involvement Coordinator, you must help your Director see why these kinds of problems don't have to occur. And you will have to help to find ways to stop them from happening.

You may also have another very significant problem --- convincing your Director to let you use your time in the way you think best.

Does your Director use you as a "Girl Friday" or a "Go-For"? Does your Director ask you to do errands and take on special projects which don't have much to do with parent involvement? In many Head Start programs the Parent Involvement Coordinator is more like a Special Assistant to the Head Start Director. If this is your situation, you have probably become very valuable to your Director for these kinds of activities. If so, you must persuade your Director to let you take on a different role.

This is very important. You will have to persuade your Director. You will have to convince him that it is worthwhile to let you use your time differently. You may even have to convince your Director that you are competent to decide how to use your time.

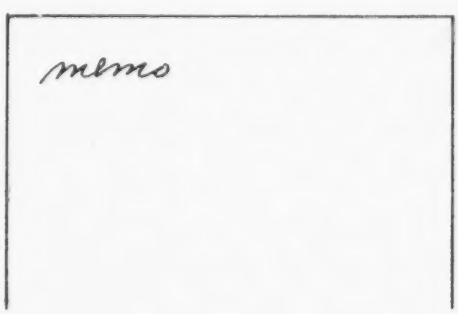
Don't expect your Director to understand your job and to ask you to spend your time this way. Don't give up because your Director doesn't understand. Get out and convince him!

OK. So you must show your Director that

1. Your Parent Involvement Program will be a good thing for Head Start and will not make his job more difficult;
2. That you have a plan for parent involvement that must have his support;
3. That you must be able to make your own decisions about how you spend your time and that all of your time must go into parent involvement activities.

How do you convince your Director of these things? One way is to have a plan. A good, clear, simple plan which your Director and the other staff can see and understand easily. The next few pages will show you one way to present such a plan.

First, prepare a short memorandum to your Director describing the objectives of your Parent Involvement Program and the methods you propose for achieving them. The following is a sample of a memorandum. Use this sample to prepare yours if it seems appropriate to your Agency.



MEMORANDUM

To: The Head Start Director Date: November 15, 1972
From: The Parent Involvement Coordinator
Subject: The Proposed Parent Involvement Program for 1972-1973

I. Purpose of Memo

This memorandum will outline for you the proposed objectives of our Parent Involvement Program for 1972-1973. It will then describe briefly the methods and approaches I propose for achieving our parent involvement objectives. Finally, it will recommend for your approval the support and activities which you and the other program staff might provide to make the Parent Involvement Program a success.

II. Objectives of the Parent Involvement Program

The Parent Involvement Program will have the following broad objectives:

— To fulfill as fully as possible the guidelines and regulations for parent involvement as outlined in the Head Start Policy Manual;

— To provide the parents of the children in our program with a way to participate in the making of policies which will affect them and their children;

— To provide the parents of the children in our program with a way to benefit from the skills and resources of our staff and Center to be more effective parents;

— To provide the parents of the children in our program with an opportunity to learn more about each other and the general community and its needs.

III. The Approach to Parent Involvement

The approach we propose involves 3 parts:

Part 1 — Orient the staff of the Head Start Center on the general goals and approaches of the Parent Involvement Program and get mutual agreements as to individual staff roles and responsibilities — in brief, to get staff involvement and participation.

Part 2 --- To divide the parents into small sub-groups within which effective participation is possible.

Part 3 --- To assist with the forming of a Parent Committee which will be truly representative of all the parents.

IV. Recommended Action

To get our parent involvement program operational as quickly as possible, I recommend that we meet as quickly as possible so that I may describe the Parent Involvement plan to you in greater detail and get whatever suggestions or modifications you propose.

After you have given your Director a memo explaining your goals and objectives briefly and requesting a follow-up meeting, you will want to follow-up quickly and set a time to meet with your Director. Be sure to allow plenty of time for your meeting. It could take an hour and a half or two hours.

Prepare For Your Meeting With the Director

Now, let's assume that your Director has agreed to a meeting. You will want to prepare very carefully. And you must have some work already completed.

We suggest you make a list of the work you must complete before your meeting and another list of the things you want to accomplish in your meeting. Here are some suggested items. Let's take one list at a time.

To do before the meeting with the Director

1. Have complete list of all parents
2. Have tentative sub-committees established
3. Prepare flip charts for presentation
4.
5.
6.
7.

Item number 3 on this list can be very important. Prepared flip charts are much easier for two or more people to follow. And they will show the Director that you have done a professional job of planning and really know what you want to do.

What should you put on your chart?

Lists of the different parent sub-committees and who are recommended to be in them.

A picture or graph showing the parent involvement structure you propose. (You may want to draw a picture like the one on Page 34).

A calendar of events showing

a. When you propose to orient the staff

b. When you propose to orient the parents

c. When the first sub-committee meetings will be held

d. When the first Parent Committee meeting will be held

e. When the first Policy Committee meeting will be held

A list of the responsibilities of the Director and the Head Start staff for the Parent Involvement Program.

When you have completed your preparations for your meeting with the Director, take a few minutes and write down what you want to accomplish in your meeting. Your list might look like this:

To be sure the Director fully understands the proposed Parent Involvement Program;

To get the Director's approval and support of the proposed program.

To get the Director to agree on the dates for the orientation of the staff and the parents.

You are now ready to meet with the Director. Expect him to ask a lot of questions. Expect him to be doubtful. After all, you are proposing something new. Expect him to suggest changes.

There are some parts of the program you are proposing which can and perhaps could be changed to meet the special needs of your Head Start program. Be flexible and support changes which will make the program work better for your situation. Be firm and insistent about not making changes which will harm the Parent Involvement Program. Of course, if your Director insists, you must make whatever changes he demands. But you can state very clearly that you feel certain changes will harm the program. In most cases you certainly will cause your Director to think again and even change his mind.

How do you know what changes would help the program? How would you know which changes would hurt the program? It's not going to be easy. To get ready for your talk with your Director, practice by answering the following questions he might ask you.

Exercise

The following questions might be asked by your Head Start Director. After each question or suggestion is a "Yes" or a "No". If you believe the change could be made without hurting the program, circle "Yes." If you believe it would hurt the program, circle "No." If you believe the change could be made but it is not desirable, circle "Yes, but . . . . "

1. Do we have to have a separate orientation for both staff and parents? Can't you give everyone one big orientation?	Yes	Yes, but . . .	No
2. Do we have to have all those Sub-Committees ?	Yes	Yes, but . . .	No
3. Can't we just stay with the one Parent Committee group and have it meet more often?			
4. Do we have to have a staff member assigned to each sub-committee? Can't you be the staff coordinator for all the sub-committees?	Yes	Yes, but . . .	No
5. Do we have to follow this strict schedule of having the sub-committees meet during the first 10 days of the month, the Parent Sub-Committee meeting between the 11th and the 20th day, and the Policy Council meeting between the 21st and 30th days?	Yes	Yes, but . . .	No

6. Do we have to have to have such an extensive Parent Involvement Program? It's so much trouble why don't we just continue as we are? Yes Yes, but . . . No

Recommended Responses

1. For question number 1, the recommended reply is, "Yes, but . . . " It would be possible to orient both the staff and the parents together; but this is much less desirable. When you assemble all the parents together for your orientation, you will want to have a lot of help. You will want the staff to know and understand the program and not be raising questions about it or appearing doubtful in front of the parents.

2. The answer to this question must be an absolute "No." You must have the Sub-Committees. That is the heart of the program. No one can participate effectively in a group of 15, 20, 30 or more people. The key to success of your program will be to have your parents in small enough groups for them to speak freely and participate freely. Another advantage to the Sub-Committees is that they allow the parents more options to choose where they want to meet and when. With only one group meeting at one time, there is a greater chance that many will not attend because of conflicts in their schedules or because of transportation problems.

3. You could reply "Yes, but . . . " to this question, but this is a big but. Without the participation of the staff in each Parent Sub-Committee, you lose an important part of the program. The presence of a staff member will help insure that the meetings occur and that when they occur the parents will talk about the Head Start program and Head Start concerns. Also, the staff member adds much. He or she can explain curricula and Head Start policy questions. He or she can talk about the children from first-hand observation and describe particular problems any children may be having. Often the teacher will be able to help with recommended solutions.

4. The answer to this question could be "Yes." You remember that the schedule of meetings was recommended so that the Parent Sub-Committees would be able to make recommendations to the Parent Center Committee. Similarly, the Policy Council meeting should occur each month after the Center Committee has met so it can make recommendations and suggest

issues for discussion to the Policy Council. This would be a good arrangement if you could work it out; but it's obviously not crucial to the success of the program.

5. Clearly, the answer to this question is "No." That should need no more explanation.

Did you answer them all correctly? If not, don't be discouraged; that's why we're practicing. But you may not have completely understood the approach outlined in Chapters III and IV or the reason for this approach explained in Chapters I and II. If you go back and reread those chapters while these questions are still fresh in your mind, you will probably find that it is all much clearer to you.

Let's return now to your meeting with your Director. If you have discussed these questions and explained your program, you are ready to ask your Director if he likes the approach and will support you. Be satisfied if he says only that he will support you but is doubtful. If you accomplish this much, you have done a lot. You're ready to get started.

Summary

This chapter reminded you that the support of your Head Start Director is absolutely essential for the success of your program. You've learned some ways to go about getting that support by insuring that your Director is thoroughly informed about all of your plans and intentions and has had a chance to say yes or no. In short, we've shown you a way to get a kind of "contract" with your Director for what you will do and how you will go about it.

Of course, once you have won the support of your Director you can't just forget about him. You must keep him informed of your progress and activities. You must check with him routinely, especially if you want to meet with the staff or do something a little unusual. You want to be sure that his support increases and grows stronger. And the best way to do that is to keep him continually involved in the Parent Involvement Program.

On the other hand, you will now have a contract with your Director. And if he forgets and asks you to run an errand or do some job which takes you away from the busy job of organizing the parents and overseeing the Sub-Committees and Parent Committee --- you may gently remind him that you have made an agreement. In other words, if you do your "contracting" right, you will find that it protects you and your time as well.

VIII parent involvement and the Center staff

Many Parent Involvement Coordinators *say*

> The Center staffs don't think our work is important.
> We can't have parent involvement without the Center staff's help and they don't seem to want to help.
> The staff of our Center doesn't understand why it should be involved. They say parent involvement is "my job" and not their job.

Should Center staff be involved in parent involvement programs? How much? How can you get staff involved? In this chapter we will look for answers to these kinds of questions.

You've heard the title Parent Involvement Coordinator. Maybe that's your title. It's a good title because of the word "coordinator." Why do you think Head Start selected the word "coordinator?" What do you coordinate?

You know the answer. You coordinate the staff of the Head Start Center with the parents. Basically, you are a helper; and you have the important mission of getting the staff and the parents talking, sharing, learning, and in many ways working together.

THERE CAN BE NO MEANINGFUL PARENT INVOLVEMENT WITHOUT COMPLETE STAFF PARTICIPATION

How To Get Staff Participation

You already know the first thing you must do to get staff participation. Can you guess what we have in mind?

That's right. The first thing you must do is get the full support of your Director. In Chapter VII we outlined a way you might do that.

Your approach to the staff can be very similar to what you did with the Director. The first step is to get the staff fully informed about your program. You will want to be sure that each staff member knows the following things:

Why we have parent involvement --- how it can help parents, how it can help the staff and the Center, and how it can help the children.
The goals of your Parent Involvement Program
The structure of your Parent Involvement Program --- the Policy Council, the Center Committee, and the Parent Sub-Committees
The staff's participation on the Parent Sub-Committees

Orient the Staff

The best way to be sure your staff knows these facts about parent involvement is to hold an orientation and "training session" for the staff. This is a meeting which all the staff attend. To do a proper orientation which gets the staff of your Center really involved, you will need about 2-1/2 days. The best time to do this is before the program begins; however, if your program has already begun you will have to spread it out over several days or maybe even weeks. Once you have secured the cooperation of your Director and the Education Director, you may want to send a memo to all the staff, outlining your objectives. A sample follows:

SAMPLE MEMO

Date:

MEMORANDUM

TO: Director, Central Staff, Teachers and Aides of the _____ Head Start Program

FROM: Parent Involvement Coordinator

RE: Staff Workshops preparing for Parent Involvement

Time:

Day and Date:

Place:

The workshop has the following objectives:

1. To help the staff look at ways that parent involvement can be used to assist in doing an effective job.
2. To help the staff outline a program for opening day in each center with the parents of that center.
3. To help staff prepare a plan for home visiting to inform and promote parents' attendance at center openings.
4. To help the staff learn techniques for getting parents involved and keeping them involved.
5. To help the staff develop the skills they need to implement the opening day program.

The approach to the beginning of this Head Start year is being changed. The Head Start program is requiring that parents accompany their child on opening day to the center. The plan is to open the centers, one per day. The staff of the centers that are not opening each day will assist with the children of the centers that open while the staff of the opening centers carry out the program with parents that they have planned in the workshop.

Please come prepared to participate in this new approach to parent involvement.

We will spend two weeks preparing for and implementing the new plan. The first two days of the first week on objectives 1, 2 and 3 and with home visits the remaining three days. The first day of the second week will be spent on objectives 4 and 5, with centers opening the remainder of the week.

Your cooperation, participation and enthusiasm are greatly appreciated.

The next few pages present a detailed design for an orientation of the staff.

An Overview of the Staff Orientation

The complete staff orientation program should take place over a period of two weeks. The following calendar will give you an idea of what happens each day.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WEEK ONE	Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
	Orientation for the Directors and staff of all Centers	Orientation for the Directors and staff of all Centers	Staff make home visits	Staff make home visits	Staff make home visits
WEEK TWO					
	Day Six	Day Seven	Day Eight	Day Nine	Day Ten
	Directors and staff all meet to make final preparations for opening day	day off! If all work is completed	Center 1 Opening	Center 2 Opening	Center 3 Opening

As you can see from this calendar, all the staff must participate in getting the parents oriented to the Center and the Parent Involvement Program. Here is the meaning of the Calendar in more detail:

Week 1

Days 1 and 2 (Monday and Tuesday):
During these two days you will help to insure that the staff understand the Parent Involvement Program and their role in it. Finally, they will plan the home visits to prepare for opening day when all the parents and children will come to the Center. Most important, these two days will help you get their cooperation and support.

Days 3, 4, and 5 (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday):
During these three days each staff member will visit the homes of the parents. By this time you will know which staff are working with which Parent Sub-Committees. You will want to be sure that the staff member visits the parents who will make up the Sub-committee to which he will be an adviser.

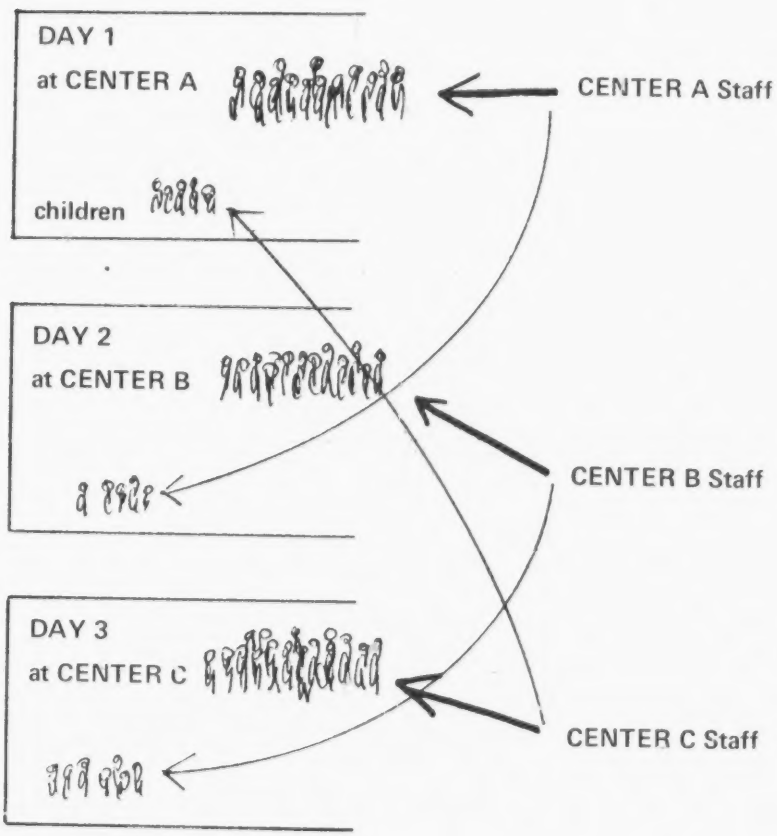
Week 2

Day 1 (Monday):
On this day all the staff will reassemble and will compare their experiences and learnings from their home visits. They will then complete their final design for the opening day.

Day 2 (Tuesday):
If all the work and all the preparations for the opening day have been completed, the staff will have this day off to rest.

Day 3 (Wednesday):
Day 4 (Thursday):
Day 5 (Friday):
During these days each of the Centers will have their "opening day" orientation for parents and children.

NOTE CAREFULLY: This plan requires the staff of each of the Centers of a Head Start Program to help each other. For example, if your program has three Centers, each would open on a different day. The day each Center opened, the staff from the other Centers will take care of the children. That will leave the staff of the opening Center free to get to know the parents. Perhaps, this illustration will make this clearer.



Now let's look at those first two days of orientation.

	Monday	Tuesday
Week 1	Staff Orientation	Staff Orientation

These are some of the most important days of your Center year. If they go well, you'll have the Center staff with you and supporting the Parent Involvement Program.

Here is a "design" for what to do during these days. It has been use tested in several Head Start programs already with considerable success.

Read through this design carefully to be sure that you understand it. After you are sure you understand the design, you may find some areas you would like to change to make it more suitable for your Centers.

A Word About Doing Workshops

It is important that you take a few minutes before beginning each session to loosen up the group with whom you are working. You should try to "set a climate" where all will be comfortable and happy to be. A game, a song, a joke, etc., that brings laughter may be all that is needed to create an atmosphere in which you can begin to accomplish your objectives.

A Design For Head Start Staff Orientation To Parent Involvement

EXERCISE I

Day:	Day 1
Time:	9:00 A.M. (First Session) (1 hour)
Purpose:	To inform the staff (1) about what will happen during the two days, (2) of the general objectives of the Parent Involvement Program.
Exercise:	Lecture
Responsible Party:	Lecturer — Head Start Director or Parent Involvement Coordinator
Group Configuration:	All Staff assembled together
Materials/ Resources Needed:	Prepared flip charts; viewgraphs and overhead projectors, if available.

Lecture:

Good morning. It's a pleasure to see you all here together again as we get ready for another year with Head Start. During the next 30 or 40 minutes I would like to outline why we have set aside these two days and what we expect to do during them.

We hope to use these next two days for several purposes. First and foremost we want to develop together a strategy which will help to get the parents of the children in our Centers really involved in their Head Start program. We have some ideas and approaches which we would like to share with you.. As you know, meaningful parent involvement means interaction with the full staff of the Head Start Center. This means we will need your full cooperation, support, and participation in parent involvement this year. We hope to begin that full involvement on the opening day; and so a second result of these two days will be an opening day program which we have all designed together and in which we all participate.

Before we discuss that further, however, let me review some of the reasons why we have parent involvement and some of the objectives of our Parent Involvement Program.

Why do we have parent involvement? Is it really necessary?

> At this point the speaker should stop and give members of the group an opportunity to suggest some answers to these questions.
> Take approximately 5 minutes to hear from a few members. Then go on.

As some of you said, perhaps the most important reason for parent involvement is that if it occurs properly, the parents will be able to support the growth of their children at home and to help insure that their children really do get a head start.

Here is a summary of some of the reasons we know of for having a strong Parent Involvement Program in our Center.

Have a flip chart prepared with these points on it or if necessary, list these on a flip chart as you talk.

The Head Start Policy Manual says all Head Start Centers must have a strong Parent Involvement Program in which all the parents have an opportunity to be involved in the activities, policies, and programs of the Center.

A good Parent Involvement Program can strengthen the Head Start by giving the parents a chance to support the curricula of the Centers in their homes.

A Parent Involvement Program can help the staff of the center by giving them a chance to learn the special problems and needs of the children in their classrooms.

Here are the objectives that we have for today that hopefully will be helpful to us in planning for Parent Involvement for our Head Start Program.

Have a flip chart prepared with these points on it, entitled Objectives for Today:

* A different way to look at the Head Start Home
* Deciding what we need to know from parents
* Developing techniques for getting information

There isn't going to be much more lecturing for the rest of these sessions. We're going to do some work in small groups and even some exercises which should help us get to our objectives. We hope that what is planned will be participative, fun, using all of our personal resources and will be informal. With this overview, I suggest we get into our first session.

EXERCISE II

Day:	Day 1
Time:	10:00 A.M. (Second Session) (2 hours)
Purpose:	To help the staff to begin thinking about the needs of the children and the kinds of homes and environments the children come from.
Exercises:	Small Group Exercises Large Group Discussion
Responsible Party:	Head Start Director or Parent Involvement Coordinator gives instructions to the groups and helps with the reporting out of the results.
Group Configuration:	Participants are divided into groups of 5 and 6 for the first hour. For the second hour, all are assembled in total group. If more than one Center is involved, have the groups composed of representatives from each Center.
Materials/ Resources Needed:	Flip charts or large newsprint for each small group. (6 or 8 pads) Boxes of crayons containing several colors for each group. Enough space or meeting rooms for each group to work separately.

Leader Notes for Exercise II

The leader will ask the participants to divide into groups of no more than 6 participants. Be sure that each group has a flip chart and a room or enough space where it can work apart from the others without distraction.

For this exercise we would like you to divide yourselves into small groups. No group should have more than 6 members. The assignment is for each group to draw a picture which it feels shows what the home of the average Head Start child is like. Use your imagination. Show what you feel is important.

You will have approximately one hour for this exercise. We will then get together again here and compare and discuss our drawings. Each group may want to select a spokesman to explain its drawing.

After 30-40 minutes have elapsed, you may want to check with each group to see if it is nearly complete. If all finish sooner than one hour, reconvene the group. After one hour encourage those who are not yet finished to do so and reconvene the group as quickly as possible. You can then introduce the second part of this exercise as follows.

Let's now share the results of this past hour's exercise. Could someone show us her group's drawing and explain it to us?

Allow each group sufficient time to present its picture.

The leader may want to ask the following kinds of questions:

1. Has your group seen homes which are really like this?
2. What are some of the possible effects on a child of a home like this?
3. Does this home situation have any relevance to our Head Start program?
4. Do we know that the home is like this or do we hope it is?
5. How does it compare with your home?

EXERCISE III

Day:	Day 2
Time:	9:00 A.M. (First Session) (3 hours)
Purpose:	To inform the staff of the Parent Involvement structure and the way "opening day" can be used to begin the Parent Involvement Program; to cause the staff to begin thinking about ways parents can feel needed by the program and can feel helped as well.
Exercise:	Lecture Small and Large Group Exercises Question and Answer Panel
Responsible Party:	Head Start Director or Parent Involvement Coordinator
Group Configuration:	All participants from all Centers are assembled together and then divide into small groups of 5 or 6 persons. Then the small groups will reassemble into one large group.
Materials/ Resources Needed:	

The leader will want to present a brief lecture on the new Parent Involvement structure. The following lecture is offered as a sample of what might be said. Be sure to modify and adapt it to conform with what actually occurred on Day 1 and the needs of your group.

Introduction to Exercise III

This morning we looked at our ideas about what the average Head Start child's home is like. We saw that the typical child may have a lot of needs which the Head Start program could help with. In addition, some of us began to see some ways our program could benefit from a chance to talk with parents and learn about individual children's needs.

This afternoon, we will explore that possibility further. We will see what kinds of information and help we think we might like to get from parents and then spend a little time brainstorming about how we might get that information.

To do this I would like you to return to the small groups you were in this morning and do the following assignment:

> Have this assignment written on a flip chart or the leader may write it out as he talks.

In small groups, make a list of all the items or subjects you as staff or a Head Start Center might find out from parents about the children in your classrooms which could help you provide a richer experience for them. Some examples of questions you might list are:

Does he talk to people?	What are his favorite foods?
Can he dress himself?	Is he allergic to anything?
Does he look at books?	Does he have temper tantrums?

You will have approximately one-hour-and-a-half to complete this exercise.

> After 1-1/2 hours reassemble the group and ask each group to report. You might say:

"Let's see now what each group came up with. It will be interesting to see what the differences are, if any. We will want to keep all of the questions that were generated by this exercise because they will become the basis for work to be done by sub-committees in the coming year.

Let each group present its list and offer any explanations it wishes to make about any items. You might have spokesmen from each group take turns, each presenting a separate item from their list.

"The leader might want to ask the following kinds of questions:

1. Would knowing the answers to the questions we have listed here be helpful to you in doing your job?
2. Are you seeing Parent Involvement any differently than before?
3. Can you think of some ways in which we might get the answers to some of the items we have listed?

After each group has presented its list, the leader will want to introduce the final exercise of the afternoon. He might do so in the following way:

"Now that we have an idea of the kind of information and input we would like from parents, we need to develop some strategies for ways to get that information.

For this next exercise, however, let's try to have some fun as well. The assignment is to return to your small groups and develop a skit, a little play, or even some role play situations showing how you might get some information you have suggested you need.

If there is confusion about the meaning of this assignment, you might give the group the following example: "If one group decided that a home visit could get the necessary information, that group might develop a role play between a staff member and an imaginary mother showing what questions would be asked and how they might be asked.

You will have approximately one hour for this assignment and then we will reassemble and hear each group's presentations.

After one hour reassemble the group and have each small group give its presentation. After all the presentations, close the days exercises with some remarks like the following:

Today we have looked at some of the ways parents could help us to develop a stronger, more relevant program for the children in our Centers. I think we have seen that if we can get parents involved and working with us they can help a lot.

We will spend tomorrow developing our plans for parent involvement for the next year. One of the most important features of this plan is our orientation of the parents on opening day; and tomorrow we spend much of our time planning for that orientation. Since the orientation cannot be successful without the parents being there, it will be important for us to plan for the home visits we will be making for the remainder of the week during which we will let the parents know the details of when and where to come and what to expect when they get there.

EXERCISE IV

Day:	Day 2
Time:	9:00 A.M. (First Session) (3 hours)
Purpose:	To inform the staff of the Parent Involvement structure and the way "opening day" can be used to begin the Parent Involvement Program; to cause the staff to begin thinking about ways parents can feel needed by the program and can feel helped as well.
Exercise:	Lecture Small and Large Group Exercises Question and Answer Panel
Responsible Party:	Head Start Director or Parent Involvement Coordinator.
Group Configuration:	All participants from all Centers are assembled together and then divided into small groups of 5 or 6 persons. Then the small groups will reassemble into one large group.

SECOND DAY LECTURETTE

Good morning. Yesterday was a long day but we accomplished a good deal. We talked about the typical home of the Head Start child and what some needs might be. We then looked at how the Head Start Center could help the child meet some of these needs. We talked about how it would be helpful if we worked closely with the parents, sharing information which would help us do a better job. Finally, we spent the last hours developing strategies for ways we could get information from the parents.

One fact is clear. If we can make parent involvement work, we can create a better experience for "our" children. We can do a service for the parents; and in the long run perhaps we can do something to help improve the communities we serve. Not unimportant. We can also fulfill an important requirement of the Office of Child Development which supplies the money for our program.

"Another fact is clear. No one person can make parent involvement happen by himself. If we leave parent involvement to be done by the Parent Involvement Coordinator or the Director or by someone else, we will have only token involvement. This is because parent involvement involves all of us. After all, who are the parents to be involved with? The answer can only be, they are to be involved with all the staff.

As you know, we've been talking about parent involvement in Head Start for a long time. Many of you have worked hard in past years to get parents involved. But we haven't had the success we've wanted. So, this year we're going to try something different. We're going to offer and recommend to the parents an organization structure which should make it easier for every individual parent to be a part of the decisions, policies, and programs of the Center. This structure should also help the parents to better use the resources of the Center to improve their abilities as parents and perhaps even their communities.

Let me explain this structure in a little more detail. You all know that the primary vehicle for parent involvement is the Center Committee. All parents are supposed to be on that committee. All parents are supposed to make recommendations, review and approve various aspects of our program from that committee. And they elect representatives to their Policy Council which come from that Committee.

The Center Committee will continue to be the central voice of the parents. But to make it more useful, we're going to suggest to the parents that they form Sub-Committees -- either composed of parents with children in the same classroom or of parents who live in the same geographical area. Whichever is most feasible.

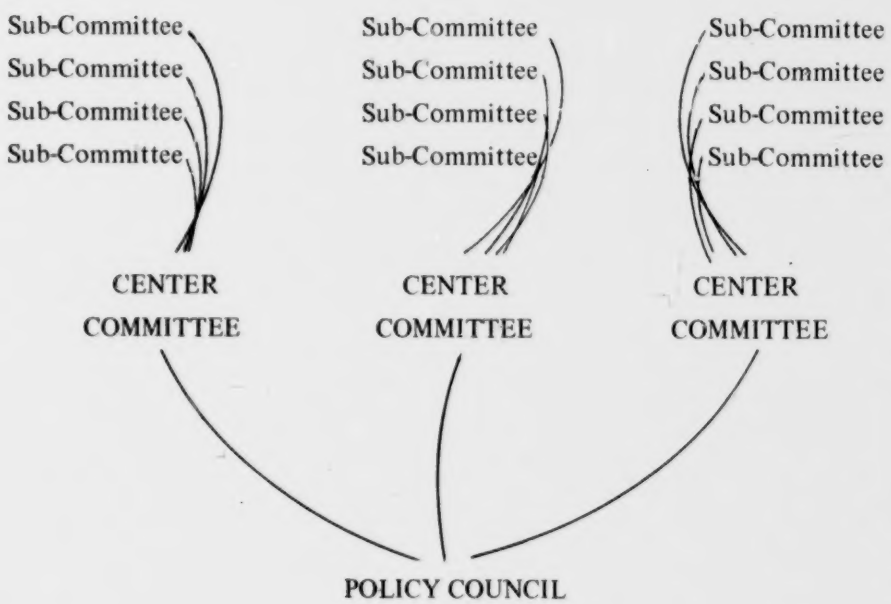
If the parents accept this idea, these Sub-Committees will meet monthly at a time and place of the committee's choosing. Each Sub-Committee will have two representatives who will attend monthly Center meetings. Of course any and all parents would be able and welcome to attend. But these two representatives would pledge themselves to attend.

"Why do this? First, after careful study it is clear that there are too many parents to meet and do anything constructive in one large monthly meeting. People talk and think best in small groups with people whom they know. The Sub-Committees will group parents who have common interests and needs --- either because they all have children in the same classroom or because they all live in the same community --- into smaller groups.

Second, with only 1 meeting occurring once a month, there is a greater chance that more people will not be able to come because of conflicts in schedule or transportation problems. By having smaller groups meet in places of their own choosing at times of their own choosing, there is more likelihood that more parents will get together more often.

So, to repeat the proposed plan quickly --- we are going to try to help set up a parent involvement structure which will look like this:

Have the following diagram prepared on a flip chart.



For this plan to be as effective as possible, there is one more important feature to it. Each staff member of the Center should serve as advisor or liaison with a Sub-Committee in the Center.

This will be a very important role and a difficult role. For each staff member will be associated with a Parent Sub-Committee; but he can only be an adviser or helper at the parents' request. He cannot vote. And he should not try to influence the parents in any way. He is there to help, to clarify, and to answer questions; and, in general, to bring the Head Start program to the parents.

You could ask, "Why bother to have each of us select a Sub-Committee or be assigned to a Sub-Committee? Why not wait until the parents invite us?"

Let me try to answer that. We believe that we must do more than just sit back and wait for the parents to ask us. We don't think that's fair. We want to go out of our way to make ourselves available. We know it's not easy to ask for help. After all, the parents are meeting because we've asked them to. We've told them that this is one of the conditions of having a child in the Center. So, it's up to all of us to help them make their meetings as productive as possible.

We know that you have many questions about what has been said and we know that it is important to have those questions answered if we are going to have an effective program. We realize that success depends upon you and your understanding of what has been said.

At this point before we divide into groups with others from our centers, take a few minutes and write down any questions you have about anything that has been said.

Allow 5 minutes for participants to individually write questions.

The leader will ask the participants to form groups containing all of the staff members of particular Head Start Centers. There should be as many groups as there are centers in the program. If possible, the maximum number for an effective group is 12 participants.

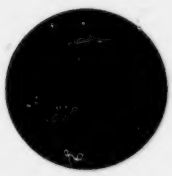
Now get with the other staff that work in your center and list on newsprint the questions that must be answered before you could carry out this new idea.

"You will have 45 minutes to complete your list of questions and select a spokesman to share the questions later on.

After 30-40 minutes have elapsed, you may want to check with each group to see if it is nearly complete. After another ten or fifteen minutes, reconvene the large group. You can then introduce the second part of this exercise as follows:

"We are going to form a panel composed of myself, the director, the education director and any other key staff that have been in on the formulation of the plans for the new structure. We are asking that the spokesmen from the groups take turns in asking the questions developed. Our panel will attempt to answer the questions which will hopefully clarify your understanding of the intended program.

Allow the question and answer period to go on until all are satisfied, trying not to have the period last longer than one hour. This exercise should be completed before lunch.



EXERCISE V

Day:	Day 2
Time:	1:30 P.M. (Second Session) (3 hours)
Purpose:	To develop a plan for making home visits.
Exercises:	Chart Presentation Small Groups Large Group Role Plays
Responsible Party:	Head Start Director or Parent Involvement Coordinator
Materials/ Resources Needed:	Flip charts, marking pencils.

The leader will want to present a brief lecture presenting a chart that has been prepared in conjunction with the Education Director. (Perhaps the chart could be presented by the Education Director). The chart should list Center openings and dates, and support staff assigned to children.

Good afternoon. This morning our question and answer period was very stimulating. We hope that this new program is very clear in our minds and that we are now able to take part in its implementation.

"This chart pictures what next week will look like as far as the dates each of our centers will open. It also shows staff assignments for each day. Remember, on the day a center opens, the staff of that center will be with the parents of that center and the staff of another center will care for the children. Remember also that after opening day at the center, that center will close for the remainder of the week, giving all centers a chance to have their opening day program.

Now look at the chart and write down where you will be on which day and doing what.

EXAMPLE: WEEK 2 -- STAFF OF CENTER A

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
FINAL PLANNING WORKSHOP	With the children of Center C at Center C	With the parents of my center	off	With the children of Center B

Leader will want to give about 10 minutes for each to fill in a calendar and give any individual assistance that may be needed.

"If everyone knows his schedule for next week, we can now get into the very important task of planning for the home visits that we will make to get the parents to come to the opening day programs. To satisfy the questions that parents might have about the importance of opening day, we have to be pretty sure to give the necessary information to them. To do this let us return to our center groups. Here is the assignment.

In small groups of staff from each Center, develop two lists of items to be accomplished during your home visit — (1) things you want to learn about the child and the home, and (2) things you feel the parents should know about opening day at the center.

Take 1 hour to complete this task.

After the groups return, have one or two groups present their list. If there are more than two groups, you do not need to have each one describe its list. Instead, after two groups have presented theirs, ask if there are any significant differences or additions any other group can come up with.

"Now that we have a picture of what to do on our home visits, we need to talk a little more about what will happen on opening day so that we can give the parents an idea about what to expect.

We are not actually going to plan the opening day program today because that part is reserved for our workshop next Monday. The list of objectives that you see here are the things we want to accomplish at each opening day. So, we can tell parents that this is what they can expect and we can work out the details about how to accomplish these objectives at our next workshop.

Leader should present the following lists of objectives for opening day and ask the staff to incorporate the information into the lists that were made in the previous exercise. Be sure to adapt the objectives to your particular program.

OPENING DAY OBJECTIVES

I Get acquainted
- A. Staff and parents
- B. Parents and other parents

II Experience the center
- A. Know the composition of the classrooms
- B. Know how the classrooms are staffed
- C. Know the rest of the staff at the Centers and their jobs

III Know the components of Head Start
- A. The Education Component
- B. The Nutrition Component
- C. The Social Services Component
- D. The Health Component
- E. The Parent Involvement Component
- F. Other components in your program

IV Understand the meaning and structure of parent involvement
- A. Sub-Committees by classroom or geographic area
- B. Center committee elected by Sub-Committees
- C. Policy Council representatives elected by Center Committees

Now that you have all of the information for your home visits this week, go back to your center group and prepare a skit or role play demonstrating the visits you will be making. You will have approximately 45 minutes for this and then we will reassemble and hear each group presentation.

After 45 minutes reassemble the group and have each center staff give its presentation. Introduce the presentations with remarks like the following:

"We will now have each group present its skit. Let us put ourselves in the role of a Head Start parent and ask ourselves this question: "Would I attend the opening day program based upon this home visit?"

When each group finishes, hold a short discussion, asking for comments relating to that question. At the end of the presentations, close the day by saying something like the following:

"In these two days, we have worked very hard in looking at Parent Involvement and how it can be helpful to us and we can be helpful to it. Now it's time to visit parents and hopefully begin the close relationship required to make our efforts successful. Good luck on your home visits.

During Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of this orientation week, the staff will be making home visits. The Parent Involvement Coordinator and the Head Start Director as well as any other staff who may not be making home visits should stand by to help out in case there are any mix-ups or problems. For example, if one of the staff gets sick or has some special problem and cannot make her visits, the Parent Involvement Coordinator or other unassigned staff member should step in and visit that parent herself. Try to see that all parents are visited.

The following Monday all the Staff from each of the Centers should reassemble to complete preparations for the Opening Day of each of the Centers. We have included a "design" for how this day might be conducted.

EXERCISE VI

Day:	Day 6
Time:	9:00 A.M. (First Session) (1 hour)
Purpose:	To help the staff make final preparations for "opening day" at the Head Start Centers.
Techniques:	Small groups Large groups
Responsible Party:	Head Start Director or Parent Involvement Coordinator gives instructions to the groups and helps with the reporting out of the results.
Group Configuration:	Participants are divided into groups by center staff for the first hour. For the next half hour, all are assembled in the total group. For the next hour and a half, the center staffs are once again in separate groups and an additional group is formed containing the central staff.
Materials/ Resources Needed:	Flip charts or large newsprint for each small group, felt tip markers and masking tape.

OPENING:

Good morning; welcome back after three very busy days of home visiting. I know we all have a lot to tell about that experience and all of that information is important to us, especially as we plan for opening days at the centers.

"We think that our planning for opening day will be helped if we know some things about the people we are planning for, the parents. To do this, let us return to our center groups and here is the assignment:

Have this assignment written on a flip chart or the leader may write it out as he talks.

"In your group, share your experiences of home visiting with one another and then list all of the things you know about the parents that will be helpful in planning an opening day program. Examples of things to list are: number of parents coming; are they shy; are they cooperative; etc.; are they new to Head Start, etc.

You will have approximately one hour to complete this exercise.

After 45 minutes, rotate among the groups to be sure they have a pretty good picture of who it is they will be planning opening day programs for. You may offer additional comments as necessary. When you are satisfied that each groups' list is sufficient, call the entire group together and give the following lecturette:

"Last week, before you went on your home visits, we put up a list of the objectives that we want to accomplish on opening day.

You may once again wish to use that flip chart you developed based upon page 117.

"It will be our job today to take each of these objectives and with the information that we have just listed about the parents that are coming, prepare some ways or methods that we could use to accomplish these objectives.

Let's look at each of the objectives while I describe some possible ways to accomplish them.

1. Get acquainted

Each of the staff members could be responsible for getting together the 8 or 10 parents of the Sub-Committee he will be working with. He could introduce himself and tell something about himself followed by each of the parents doing likewise. Blank sheets of paper could be passed out asking each person to draw a picture of himself and writing a one-word description of how he is feeling. Pictures are then passed to the right until each is returned to its owner. Some songs which are used to help children learn names can be can be sung in the groups.

2. Experience the Center

Sub-Committee groups could take a walk through the classrooms while the staff describes each of the areas.

Parents could act as if they are children and could participate in some of the activities led by staff.

The staff of the center could rotate to each group introducing themselves and describing some of their duties. The parents could ask questions and hold a discussion on what was said for ten minutes after each staff member speaks.

3. Know the Components of Head Start

Primarily this is the job of the Central Staff members and our task after this lecture will help them develop some ways to do this.

4. Understand the Meaning and Structure of Parent Involvement.

This is one of the most crucial parts of our opening day program.

We are attempting to create three kinds of groups:

(1) The Sub-Committee: composed of 1/2 the parents of a classroom or of 8 to 10 parents that live close to one another geographically.

(2) The Center Committee: composed of members elected by each Sub-Committee.

(3) The Policy Council: composed of those members elected by the Center Committees of each center for the entire program.

The leader at this point may want to present some of the ideas from Chapter IV that would suggest ways to accomplish this objective.

For the purpose of planning for opening day, we are going to ask you to once again form into center groups. Additionally we are going to ask the Central Staff (the component heads) to also form a group. Here is the assignment for the center groups.

Take each of the objectives that we have just talked about and decide on a way to accomplish each for the parents that are coming to your center on opening day. You will have approximately 1-1/2 hours to complete this task.

The leader may have to provide any logistical information that groups might need, i.e. beginning and ending times of opening day program, whether lunch will be served, etc.

While the center groups are working on that task, the central staff group should form. You may introduce their tasks in the following way:

"As component heads we are concerned that our departments are as well understood as possible. This would be helped if we could get a good start on opening day.

For the first task would you write down individually all of the things that you do in your job. Take about 15 minutes to do this.

(After 15 minutes you can ask if all are finished. If so, ask them to share their lists with one another in the following way.

"Would you now take turns reading your lists to the rest of the group making sure that we all get a good idea of the things you do.

(After each person shares his list ask for any comments or discussion to clarify anything said. Introduce the next task in the following way.

"Take each of your lists and identify those things on the list that depend in some way on Parent Involvement. Those items that could or should be helped if the parents cooperated with it. Take about 10 minutes to do this.

(After 10 minutes have the staff share the checked items once again. After sharing lists, give the following task.

"Of the items you have checked that could be helped by parent involvement, identify those things which should be presented to parents on opening day at the centers. When you have identified those things, prepare a number of ways that you might use to share the information with the parents on opening day. You may take the rest of the morning to come up with methods to use while the staff of the centers are deciding on methods to use to accomplish the other opening day objectives. This afternoon you should rotate among the center groups and arrange the ways you will make your presentations at Center openings.

EXERCISE VII

Day:	Day 6
Time:	1:00 P.M.
Purpose:	To prepare activities for opening day at the centers and set a schedule and assignments for the planned activities.
Methods:	Lecturette Small groups
Responsible Party:	Head Start Director/ Parent Involvement Coordinator
Group Configuration:	All participants from all centers assembled together Center groups and central staff groups
Materials/ Resources Needed:	Flip chart with time/activity sheet drawn, and/or individual time/activity hand-outs.

Good afternoon. This morning we spent our time deciding how to make opening day an active experience for us and the parents. This afternoon we would like to put the finishing touches on those activities, and assign ourselves to make sure they all take place.

> At this point you may want to show a sheet of newsprint with Time/activity format drawn on it, or some other format that you feel will be useful.

SAMPLE TIME/ACTIVITY SHEET

Time	Activity	Method	People & Materials
Example: 9:00 A.M.	Assembly / get acquainted	SONG: "The more we get together" PICTURE: Draw yourself and describe how you feel in one word — pass pictures around	Mrs. Music Teacher Mrs. Head Teacher Pencils and paper

Describe the Time/activity sheet in the following way:

"Once you have decided on the things you want to do, make sure that you have a plan for how they will get done. By placing the Time, Activity, Method and People & Materials on this sheet, you can make sure that everyone will know what to do and who will be doing everything. Be sure to leave some time for the central staff to place their part in your plan.

Ask for any questions. When ready, ask the center groups and central staff to reassemble and give the following task:

"In your groups draw a Time/Activity chart on large paper and fill it in with the activities you have planned. You may wish to copy your center's plan for your own use on separate sheets. The central staff should take their plan to each center group and fill in their part. You may have as long as you need to complete this.

You may want to rotate from group to group lending assistance. Remember, the best plan in the world is still reliant on the people who carry it out.

As groups finish you may, if time permits, have them share some of the planned activities. Some may be helpful to use in all the centers and sharing should be encouraged. This activity should take most of the afternoon. When completed, the staff should spend the remaining time planning for the children they will be working with when they are assisting in another center that is opening.

IX the policy council and the CAA board of directors

partners or enemies?

This manual has shown you some ways to increase parent involvement in your Head Start Centers. You've seen ways to give parents a broader, more meaningful voice in Center Affairs.

Parents will get a louder voice through a stronger Center Committee. Stronger Center Committees will mean stronger Policy Councils. How much stronger your Head Start's Policy Council will be depends on at least 1 thing --- the Policy Council's relationship with the CAA's Board of Directors.[1]

You know this is true and you know why. In most Community Action Agencies, the Board of Directors has the final say on most matters. It is particularly important for the Policy Council to develop by-laws indicating their functions to the board of the sponsoring agency for approval. Once this occurs, the Policy Council becomes a legally recognized and properly structured body with responsibilities to carry out its functions. A guide to revising or developing by-laws appears in Appendix C. The CAA Directors particularly want the final say about spending money and hiring and firing staff. Yet Head Start guidelines say the Policy Council must also be closely involved in these matters.

Where would you expect conflict to occur? Look again at some of those responsibilities.

[1] In the case of other contractual arrangements, the relationship would be with the principal policy-making group of the delegating agency.

POLICY COUNCIL		CAA BOARD
Approve/Disapprove goals of Head Start Center	→ ←	Approve/Disapprove the goals of all Delegate Agencies (Head Start, NYC, etc.)
Must approve/disapprove of the CAA's choice of Head Start Director	→ ←	Approve/Disapprove the choice of all key staff including delegate Agency Directors.
Must approve/disapprove of the staff of the Head Start Center	→ ←	Approve/Disapprove the choice of all professional staff
Approve/Disapprove of any unusual expense or use of funds	→ ←	Approve/Disapprove of any unusual expense or use of funds

They look like almost the same duties, don't they? That's part of the problem. Both groups are supposed to be and sometimes feel responsible for the same thing.

What happens when they fight or disagree? The Policy Council loses? That is probably what happens in most agencies.

What happens to your Parent Involvement Program if the Policy Council loses? The parents will get discouraged! They will say things like ---

"Parent involvement doesn't mean anything"

"When it comes to important matters, parents don't count too much."

"They'll let us parents have a voice in the day-to-day stuff; but for important things like money and hiring, our voice doesn't count."

We've all heard these kinds of statements. You're reading this manual so that you can do something about these kinds of feelings that parents have.

This is one reason why you must be concerned about how the Policy Council gets along with the Board of Directors. If these groups don't get along, it will hurt your program.

Whose job is it to help the Policy Council? You may be thinking that this isn't your job. You're probably right, unless your Director has specifically delegated the responsibility to you. It is the Director's job. But here is a place where you can help him/her and do a lot for your program as well. Here's how.

Make an appointment to go and talk with your Director about the Policy Council. Tell her why you want to see her and that you want to talk about the following points:

A. Present relationships between the CAA Board and the Policy Council --- particularly any problem areas.
B. Ways to strengthen the relationship between the two groups.

If you like memos, maybe you'll want to send one like this ---

MEMORANDUM

To: Head Start Director Date: January 1, 1972

From: Parent Involvement Coordinator

Subject: Our Policy Council and the CAA Board.

As you know, for our parent involvement program to be meaningful the parents must believe that they have a real voice in the Center's affairs. This means that we must have a strong and effective Policy Council.

I would like to meet with you on January 4th at 4:30 P.M. to do 2 things ---

(1) To discuss your assessment of the Policy Council's present relationship with the CAA Board of Directors; and
(2) To go over some ways we can help the Council to become stronger.

Before this meeting, do some homework. Find out the names of everyone on the Policy Council and everyone on the CAA Board of Directors. Get answers to a number of questions such as:

1. Is there anyone who is on both the Policy Council and the Board of Directors?
2. How many are in each group? What is the total number?
3. How often does the Board meet? The Policy Council? (Your Policy Council of course should be meeting once a month during the third 1/3 of the month)
4. What special committees and sub-committees has the CAA Board established?
5. What problems have the two boards had with each other? Have there been any strong disagreements or clashes?

When you meet with your Director, ask about his/her ideas about the two groups. Get answers to the above questions. You need to get agreement (A) that the two groups do need to work cooperatively and collaboratively, (B) that they probably could use some help learning how to do this, (C) that you need to get both groups together for at least 12 hours for a "session" which will help both groups work better and more closely together. For example, some centers have found it very useful to start a session late Saturday afternoon and continue it, with breaks for meals and sleep, until late Sunday afternoon.

This has been an important point. Don't let it slip by you! One of your objectives with the Director is to get her to agree to set up a day session for both the Board of Directors and the Policy Council.

You and your Director are going to use that time to "train" these two groups in ways to work more closely and collaboratively together.

In the remainder of this Chapter, we will show you one way or one design to use in helping these two groups work more closely together. Of course you should substitute your own if you have an approach you believe is more appropriate for your situation. The important point of this chapter is that the only way to get the CAA Board and the Policy Council to work better together is to actually get them working together. In other words, you must find some way to set up a joint session which can be and is a training session.

In the next few pages, you will find a detailed design for what to do with the Policy Council and the Board when they do get together. It's not very hard to follow. If you can hire a consultant or a trainer to help you, that's great! But if you don't have the money for such help, you can do it yourself. Here's how —

Let's begin by assuming your Director has said, "O.K. I'll arrange for the Policy Council and the Board to meet for 1 day." She then makes the arrangements exactly as you wanted. The two groups will come together on Saturday the 14th at 4:00 P.M. in the CAA meeting room. They will then have this schedule —

SATURDAY	4:00 - 6:00	meet
	6:00 - 7:00	dinner
	7:00 - 9:00	meet
SUNDAY	9:00 - 12:30	meet
	12:30 - 1:30	lunch
	1:30 - 5:00	meet

This session will be similar to the session for staff and parent orientation. Everyone participates. The leader's style — your style — is relaxed and informal. You are not an "expert" or a "teacher" but a group facilitator.

The following design is not as detailed as the one for staff and parent orientation. It provides you with a description of what you should say or do and ways to do it. You must plan your exact words yourself.

To get comfortable with the overall design, first look over the following schedule. Then go through what happens each day in fine detail.

POLICY COUNCIL AND CAA BOARD WORKSHOP

DAY: SATURDAY

TIME	OBJECTIVES	METHODOLOGY	MATERIALS/RESOURCES
4:00 P.M.	Get acquainted	Large circle groups of five	8½ by 11 sheets, pencils, name tags.
4:30 P.M.	Groups learn about each other	Two groups	Newsprint, magic markers, masking tape
6:00 P.M.	Dinner		
7:00 P.M.	Head Start Guidelines	Individuals fill out questionnaires Groups of five	Questionnaires, pencils
	Give answers	Trainer to group	
9:30 P.M.	Adjourn for Evening		

DAY: SUNDAY

9:00 A.M.	Learn Cooperation	Nickel Game or Prisoner's Dilemma Small Groups Select Representatives	Nickels, Pennies
10:00 A.M.	Share Problems	Two Groups	Newsprint, magic markers, masking tape
11:00 A.M.	Report out problems and categorize them	Large group representatives from groups report	Newsprint, magic markers, masking tape
12:30	Lunch		
1:30 P.M.	Make recommendations	Small groups	Newsprint, magic markers, masking tape
2:30 P.M.	Report recommendations	Large group; representatives report; discussion	
3:30 P.M.	Where do we go from here strategies		
4:30 P.M.	Summary	Group reports Discussion	
4:50 P.M.	How we feel	Large Circle	8½ x 11 sheets Pencils

SATURDAY
TIME: 4:00 P.M.

OBJECTIVE: GET ACQUAINTED

METHODOLOGY:

The participants may seat themselves in any way they like — usually they will sit in rows (theatre style). Welcome them. Thank them for being there. Let them know that you realize it's difficult to come out on a weekend.

Point to a flip chart on which you have prepared the objectives for the session. Read it to the group. Tell the group that these are the objectives you hope to accomplish but that if the group wants to change or alter them you are prepared to do so. Next give the group some idea of the type of session it will be, what kinds of exercises you will use, and the general mood you expect to achieve. Tell them it will be hard work but participative, fun and informal.

Now, pass out individual sheets of paper (8-1/2 x 11) and ask each participant to draw a picture of himself and write on that picture a one-word description of how each is feeling. You might do this yourself. Next, ask each person to pass his to the right and keep them going until he receives his back again after it has been through the entire circle. This exercise will give some comedy to the setting and will relax the group.

Finally, each participant should be given a name tag when he registers. The tags are two different colors — one for the Board and one for the Policy Council. Ask the group to divide itself into small groups of 5, with an equal number of Board and Policy Council representatives. (They can tell by the different colors of the name tags.)

The first task of the groups is for individuals to introduce themselves and share their thoughts and reactions to success of the Head Start Program.

SATURDAY

TIME: 4:30 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

OBJECTIVE: GROUPS LEARN ABOUT EACH OTHER

METHODOLOGY:

Ask the participants to form two groups — one group for Policy Council members, the other for CAA Board members. Give each group a sheet of large newsprint divided into two columns. Each column has a heading under which participants should list two responses:

HOW WE SEE THE OTHER GROUP	HOW WE THINK THE OTHER GROUP SEES US

Give the groups sufficient time to record their responses; then ask each group to select a representative to read and explain the responses to the entire group. You the leader can help the two groups to compare their answers and discuss their reactions to one another's charts.

Summarize and end this session by reminding the participants of the purpose of the workshop. It is to deal with Head Start issues in particular. Point out that there are HEW/OCD guidelines that they must know which will help them to solve particular problems. Finally, ask the participants if they need more information about the guidelines.

(Try to get their agreement to learning more about the guidelines.)

TIME: 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.

After dinner, remind the participants that they wanted to learn more about guidelines and state that the evening will be spent "boning up" on guidelines.

Pass out the Guideline Questionnaire about 70.2 "Parent Involvement Guidelines" to each participant. Ask each individual to record his answers to every question and to guess at any that are unknown. Be sure that everyone knows that these are for their own information and will not be collected or "graded."

After each participant has completed his questionnaire but before you give the answers, have everyone form again into small groups of 5 with representatives from each Board. Ask the small groups to develop a "group answer sheet." Explain that if the groups use the resources of each member well, they can increase the number of right answers of the average individual score.

After all the groups are finished, give the answers to the questions. If you have time, you might find it fun to get the groups to average their individual scores and compare the average individual score with the group score.

To facilitate reproduction of the "Guideline Questionnaire" which follows, the answers to the questions are listed here.

Answers: 1 - a; 2 - a; 3 - c; 4 - b; 5 - b; 6 - F; 7 - F; 8 - F; 9 - F; 10 - F; 11 - T; 12 - F; 13 - F; 14 - F; 15 - F; 16 - T; 17 - F; 18 - F; 19 - T; 20 - T; 21 - T; 22 - T; 23 - T; 24 - T; 25 - F.

GUIDELINE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. When the Head Start Policy Manual indicates that something MUST be done (Check one)
   a. it is an absolute requirement.
   b. it should be done unless the Head Start Director has a better plan.
   c. only the Policy Group can approve doing it differently.
2. On a Head Start Center Committee there MUST be:
   a. current parents only.
   b. 50% current parents plus ex-parents.
   c. 50% current parents plus "Representatives of the Community."
3. On a Delegate Agency Policy Committee or a Grantee Policy Council there MUST be:
   a. current parents only.
   b. at least 50% current parents plus ex-parents.
   c. at least 50% current parents plus "Representatives of the Community."
4. How is the size (number of members) for a policy group determined?
   a. Head Start Policy Manual prescribes size.
   b. The agency board decides with policy group approval.
   c. The policy group decides.
5. The maximum term of membership allowed as a member of a Head Start policy group is:
   a. 1 year.
   b. 3 years.
   c. as long as the person is doing a good job.

(True — False. Circle the correct answer)

6. Parents can only be on a policy group by being elected by a joint meeting of parents, staff and Board. T F
7. Head Start staff may attend meetings of Head Start policy groups whenever the staff member is interested. T F
8. When a Head Start Mother is working as a paid aide in the Head Start program, she is eligible to serve on the policy group as long as her child is in the program. T F
9. Ex-parents are eligible for positions designated for parents. T F
10. "Representatives of the Community" are designated by the Head Start Director to serve as members of a policy group. T F
11. Every Head Start program must have a Coordinator of Parent Activities. T F
12. There must be a representative from the CAA Board of the top level Head Start policy group. T F
13. There must be a representative on the top level Head Start policy group on the CAA board. T F
14. Home visits by teachers, aides or other staff are requirements which must be accepted by parents of Head Start children. T F
15. Parents of Head Start children are required to visit the classroom and serve as volunteers. T F
16. Head Start Centers should set aside space to be used by parents for meetings. T F

17. Funds for Parent Activities cannot be provided through the regular Head Start grant or contract. T F
18. Approval from the Policy Committee must be secured before a Head Start program can determine location of centers or classes. T F
19. Approval from the Policy Council must be secured before a Head Start program can designate delegate agencies. T F
20. Approval from the Center Committee must be secured before a Head Start program can establish criteria for selecting children. T F
21. Approval from the Policy Council must be secured before a Grantee Agency Head Start program can request funds or make major changes in the budget. T F
22. Approval from the Policy Council must be secured before a Grantee Agency can hire or fire a Head Start Director. T F
23. Approval from the Policy Committee must be secured before a Delegate Agency can hire or fire Head Start Staff. T F
24. Approval from the Policy Council must be secured before a Head Start program can establish Head Start personnel policies on hiring, firing, career development and grievance procedures. T F
25. Approval from the Policy Council must be secured before a Head Start program can direct the Head Start staff in day-to-day operations. T F

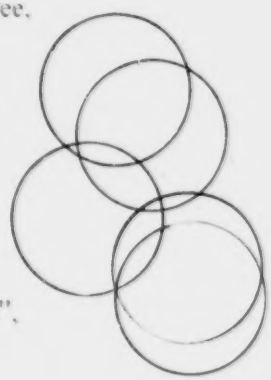
SUNDAY
TIME: 9:00 A.M.

OBJECTIVE: LEARN COOPERATION BETWEEN GROUPS

METHODOLOGY:

Briefly review the first day and remind the group that the last event was a session on the guidelines. Explain that you will start the second day with a simulation. De-emphasize the notion of a "game"; instead tell the group that they are going to participate in an exercise which will be like a real-life situation.

The exercise is called the "nickel auction". Divide the total group into two, three, or four smaller groups. Each group can have as many as 10 members. Next, each group is asked to select a representative and collect all the pennies from each member. With the pennies as his "money," the representative will attend an auction where nickels will be sold to the highest bidder. The bidding will start at 1 penny.



The object of the game is to "win as much as you can." After several "auctions", allow the representatives to return to their groups for input about strategy and tactics. After you have auctioned 10 nickels, stop the game and discuss the learnings. Some questions you might ask are

--- Who won?
--- What were the rules for your "team"?
--- Did the group representative really represent the group?
--- What assumptions did you make?
--- What competition really took place?
--- How could each have gotten more?

The discussion will point out that the only way to "win" is for each of the players to cooperate very closely. They need to band together so that each person gets a chance to "buy" the nickel for 1 penny. If the representatives from each group cooperate, they can develop ways to buy nickels for one cent each. You can then make comparisons to the way boards operate and try to get the group to suggest ways in which both Boards can win by "collaboration."

NOTE: If there is time and it is a receptive group, you may want to try a variation on this game. See Appendix A, "The Prisoner's Dilemma" game. This is a highly successful and sure way to dramatize the natural inclination of different groups to compete with and mistrust one another. It is an excellent exercise to use to train groups about ways to work more closely with one another.

TIME: 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon

OBJECTIVE: Learn About the Ways and Means of Inter-group Cooperation

METHODOLOGY:

Ask the participants to return to groups with all the CAA Board members in one group and the Policy Council members in the other. Ask these two groups to list all the problems they have heard, experienced, or even think exist in the Head Start program and its relationship to the Community Action Agency.

When the groups have completed their lists, they bring them to the large group. You should then help the two groups to see if the items on their lists fall into either one of two categories:

--- Program Operation

— Policy Issues

As you or individual group members suggest one of these categories for their items, you can add clarifying questions and additional comments. Be sure that all issues are raised and understood.

TIME: 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.

OBJECTIVE: To Develop Recommendations for Collaboration

METHODOLOGY:

Ask the participants to select a category that interests them and to join a group which will work on that category. (Two groups should then form; help each group to be of approximately equal size.) Ask the groups to go through each item on the large group's final list and develop a way to solve or lessen each problem in its chosen category. Later, have each group present its recommendations for solutions or alternatives. If the total group can reach any agreement about a solution, record it on a separate large sheet entitled "Solved Problem List."

TIME: 3:30 - 4:30 P.M.

OBJECTIVE: Each Group Will Prepare a Strategy Addressing the Question "Where Do We Go From Here"

METHODOLOGY:

Allow each Board group 30-40 minutes to meet separately to prepare its strategy. When they have finished, ask them to come together and share the final product. Allow for a short discussion and question and answer period.

TIME: 4:30 P.M.

OBJECTIVE: To Conclude the Session

METHODOLOGY:

Conclude the session by once again having each member draw a picture of himself and writing down one word about how he is feeling. Again have them pass the pictures around the room. Note: If the participants seem very tired, discouraged, or otherwise "down", you should probably just skip this and spend a few minutes congratulating the group for giving up its time and for working so hard on a weekend.

X help, hints, and concluding thoughts

about parent involvement

A good parent involvement program is a little like a rich stew. It's made up of lots of parts and ideas. As it "cooks" or develops, it changes in color, texture and taste. You're not sure exactly what's in it; but nearly everything you add makes it a little better.

That's probably the trick to successful parent involvement. Don't let it "dry up" from lack of attention or new ideas and experiments. Keep stirring it with new approaches, new programs, and new ways to help and involve parents. What do we mean by new ideas? What kinds of new approaches and programs?

In this manual you've worked hard to learn a system for organizing parents. You have seen how to construct a vehicle for helping parents have a voice in the Center and contribute to it. Remember the example of the woman who wanted to go to the supermarket but had no car? Well, you have now helped to build your own "car" for parent involvement.

Where do you go now? One center in the west developed an "idea bank" for the Parent Involvement program. It took several large pieces of newsprint paper and pasted them to a wall. Then whenever anyone heard about or thought about a new idea or a fun way to involve parents, they would write the ideas down on the "Idea Bank" list. Maybe they called it a "Bank" because it was just like putting ideas in a savings account. Here is what it looked like:

IDEA BANK

Sewing Bee	Saturday party to make materials for the center.
Children's Skits	Children put on little skits; brings parents to the center for Parent program (Be sure to hold parents session first.)
Construction Projects	Fathers and mothers participate in construction projects, e.g. building a model playground.
Hobby Demonstrations	Parents and other interested parents demonstrate their hobbies, e.g. wood-working, knitting, glass-making, model airplanes, etc.
Field Trips	Parents take children to places of special interest.

Special uses of the Parent fund for special projects.

Etc.

As you and your Center start saving ideas, you'll find that your list grows and becomes more interesting. Staff, parents — maybe even the children — will have good ideas. You might even start a prize for the "Best Idea of the Month" for Parent Involvement.

Another approach you might find helpful is to periodically evaluate your parent involvement program. There are lots of ways to do that. Spend a few days calling parents and asking them what they think about it. Ask the staff. Suggest it to the Chairperson of each of the Center Committees as an Agenda item for their next Center Committee meeting. Better yet, see if you can persuade each Center Committee to take responsibility for an evaluation of the Parent Involvement program.

With luck it will never end! You, your Center, the parents will continue to find new, better, fun ways for the parents to serve as true partners of the Head Start Program.

appendix

APPENDIX A

Prisoner's Dilemma Game [2]

GOALS

1. To explore the trust between group members and the effects of trust betrayal.
2. To demonstrate the effects of interpersonal competition.
3. To explain the merit of a collaborative posture in intra-and inter-group relations.

GROUP SIZE

Two teams of no more than eight members each.

TIME REQUIRED

Approximately one hour. Smaller teams take less time.

MATERIALS UTILIZED

Prisoner's Dilemma Talley Sheets

PHYSICAL SETTING

There should be enough space for the two teams to meet separately without interrupting or disrupting each other. In the center of the room two chairs for team representatives are placed facing each other.

PROCESS

1. The facilitator explains that the group is going to experience a simulation of an old technique used in interrogating prisoners. (He carefully avoids discussing the objectives of the exercise.) The questioner separates prisoners suspected of working together and tells one that the other has confessed and that if they both confess, they will get off easier. The prisoner's dilemma is that they may confess when they should not and that they may fail to confess when they really should.
2. Two teams are formed, named, and seated separately. They are instructed not to communicate with the other team in any way --- verbally or nonverbally --- except when told to do so by the facilitator.
3. Prisoner's Dilemma Tally Sheets are distributed to all participants. The facilitator explains that there will be ten rounds of choice, with the Red Team choosing A or B and the Blue Team choosing either X or Y.

   AX – Both teams win three points.
   AY – Red Team loses 6 points, Blue Team wins 6 points.
   BX – Red Team wins 6 points, Blue Team loses 6 points.
   BY – Both teams lose 3 points.
4. Round 1 is begun, with teams having three minutes in each round to make a decision. The facilitator instructs them not to write down their decision until he signals to do so, to make sure that teams do not make hasty decisions.
5. The choices of the two teams are announced for Round 1 and the scoring for that round is agreed upon. Rounds 2 and 3 proceed the same way.
6. Round 4 is announced as a special round, with the points payoff doubled. Teams are instructed to send one representative to the center to talk before Round 4. After three minutes of consultation with each other, they return to their teams and Round 4 begins. The number of points for the outcome of this round is doubled.
7. Rounds 5-8 proceed as in the first three rounds.
8. Round 9 is announced as a special round, with the points payoff squared. Representatives meet for three minutes, and then the teams meet for five minutes. At the facilitator's signal they mark down their choices, and then the two choices are announced. The number of points awarded to the two teams for this round is squared.
9. Round 10 is handled exactly as Round 9. Payoff points are squared.
10. The entire group meets to process the experience. The point total for each team is announced, and the sum of the two outcomes is calculated and compared to the

maximum positive outcome (126 points). The facilitator may wish to lead a discussion on the effects of high and low trust on interpersonal relations, on win-lose situations, on zero-sum games, and on the relative merits of collaboration vs. competition.

PRISONER'S DILEMMA TALLY SHEET

Payoff Schedule

Blue Team

Red Team	X	Y
A	+3 +3	+6 −6
B	−6 +6	−3 −3

Round	Minutes	Choice		Cumulative Points	
		Red	Blue	Red	Blue
1	3				
2	3				
3	3				
4*	3-reps. 3-teams				
5	3				
6	3				
7	3				
8	3				
9**	3-reps. 5-teams				
10**	3-reps. 5-teams				

* Payoff points are doubled for this round.
** Payoff points are squared for this round.

[2] Pfeiffer, J. William and John E. Jones, A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training, Volume III, University Associates Press, 1971.

APPENDIX B

Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee is the first place for parents to receive and give information concerning the program. Here are some of the functions a Sub-Committee might have and some suggestions as to things they might do in their monthly meeting to achieve them.

FUNCTIONS OF SUB-COMMITTEE	METHODS OF ACHIEVING FUNCTIONS
1. Assists teacher, director, and all other persons responsible for the development and operation of every component including curriculum in the program.	Have each staff member of Center define his job for parents. Have teachers conduct classes for parents' participation. Have discussions of what parents would like to do in relation to components. Have staff define areas in which they need help. Develop ideas for class that parents can conduct. Send ideas to Center Committee.
2. Work closely with classroom teachers and all other component staff to carry out daily activities.	Have planning meetings with parents and staff to determine what needs doing and how it will get done. Send reports to Center Committee.
3. Plan and conduct and participate in informal as well as formal program and activities for Center parents and staff.	Have discussions on what parents like to do best. After determining what people like to do, choose several ideas and see if they can be implemented. List what parents can do to carry out ideas and list what help they need from the staff. Have discussions centering around the kinds of information parents and staff have to exchange about the child at home and at the Center to serve him more effectively.
4. Participation in recruiting and screening of Center employees within H.E.W. Guidelines.	List qualifications concerning the type of person needed to do the job. Select someone for a committee to interview the candidates, who will interview according to the criteria developed by the whole group. Make recommendations to Center Committee.

Center Committee

The Center Committee is the link between all the parents and the Policy Council. They bring information from the Sub-Committee, act on it, take recommendations to the Policy Council and furnish results to the Sub-Committees. Here are some functions the Center Committees have and ways they might be accomplished.

FUNCTIONS OF A CENTER COMMITTEE	METHODS OF ACHIEVING FUNCTIONS
1. Must be consulted to identify Child Development Needs.	Have discussions at Center Meetings about: (1) What parents want for their children, (2) What things should be available for children to work with, (3) What kind of staff do you want available to children, (4) How Head Start can help you with a follow-up in the home?
2. Recommends goals for the program and the way in which they are implemented (done).	Find out how many families need Head Start. Explain what is possible and available in Head Start and ask if the family can use it. Ask parents how Head Start can fit best into their community.
3. Recommends uses of community resources in Head Start	Discuss the kind of community desired. List the resources that people know about. Determine community resources needed to fulfill desire. Invite those resource people to discuss needs at Center Meeting. Take recommendations to Policy Council.
4. Recommends the criteria for selecting children. Recommends the plans for recruiting children within H.E.W. Guidelines.	Discuss who ought to be in program. What special problems should be considered? How should program vacancies be advertised? What other ways should children be recruited? Take recommendations to the Policy Council. Should there be a waiting list? What priorities should be given to referrals from other agencies?

5. Responsible to establish a method of hearing and resolving community complaints about the Head Start Program.	Discuss how community feels about Head Start. Bring complaints about particular center to center's meeting. Decide whether they could resolve the problem at the Center Committee Meeting, or take it to the Policy Council. Set up different committees to handle different kinds of problems.
6. Recommends Personnel Policies including hiring and firing procedures and approve the Grievance Procedures.	Discuss the qualifications they think are necessary for the Head Start Staff. Discuss procedure for determining whether or not the staff is doing a good job? Discuss what additional help the staff needs to do a better job. Determine what steps should be taken to see if someone should remain or be let go. Take recommendations to the Policy Council.
7. Recommends requests for funds and the work program.	Discuss the need for Head Start. How do parents want the program to operate? What changes, if any, do they want? What additions do they want in the program? Take recommendations to the Policy Council.
8. Recommends major budget changes and work program changes while program is in operation.	Discuss what a budget is. Discuss what should be in a Head Start Budget. Get information as to how the present budget was formulated and reasons for doing so.
9. Does a self-evaluation.	Discuss what evaluation is. Discuss how good a job was done. Discuss how to solve problems. Discuss effects of program on children, on parents. Take findings to Policy Council.

Policy Council

The Parent Involvement Guidelines state the minimum functions of the Policy Council for a successful Head Start Program. The functions are listed here along with suggested ways the Policy Council might try, in order to carry out the functions.

FUNCTIONS OF THE POLICY COUNCIL	METHODS OF ACHIEVING FUNCTIONS
1. Serve as a link between public and private agencies.	Form committees around the problem areas related to Head Start and early childhood education. Those committees should know all the resources existing in the community and their use. Explain to the general public the purpose of Head Start and what it is doing.
2. Plan, coordinate and organize agency-wide activities for parents with the assistance of staff.	Discuss among all representatives the activities going on in the Center. Get input as to what people would like to do at their center but are unable to do because of lack of funds, people, etc. Add support for these activities and decide when to use parent activity funds to help carry these out.
3. Assist with communicating with parents and encouraging their participation in the program.	Discuss with representatives the reasons parents do not participate. Decide what changes can be made to get the needed participation. Make a plan to get more participation and divide the responsibilities among members.
4. Aid in recruiting volunteer services from parents and community.	Discuss and clearly define the areas in which volunteers can be helpful. Decide where in the community to look for volunteers. Help volunteers know the kinds of things that would help the program. Develop things for the people among the resources available from volunteers.
5. Administer the parent activity funds.	Get representatives from the centers to learn activities that would be beneficial for all parents. Discuss what the priorities for parent activities should be. Deciding how to spend the Parent Activity Fund.
6. Assist with the budgets and work program for each center.	Discuss how center activities fit into the overall Head Start work program. Get feedback from representatives as to how program operates at centers and support the needs that come up to keep the program effective. Review monthly financial reports.

Month	Activity (These activities must be done by every Policy Council)
1	1. Receive funds this month. 2. Review Special Conditions for things that require Council attention. (Ask Director or Executive Director for a copy of the grant documents.)
2	1. Some Special Conditions are due 30 days after Program Year starts. (The last day of this month).
3	1. Some Special Conditions are due 60 days after Program Year starts.
4	1. Some Special Conditions are due 90 days after Program Year starts. 2. Make plans for an evaluation of the program.
5	1. Conduct an evaluation of your Head Start program. 2. Your Community Representative should visit this month to monitor program. 3. Review any remaining special conditions.
6	1. Complete evaluation. 2. Receive a letter from OCD that tells you how much money to expect next year. 3. Make preparations for the OS-188. (The agency's plans for the next year)

Month	Activity
7	1. PC also has the responsibility for preparing pre-review materials for the CR. 2. 10 days after you submit a CAP 31, a Pre-review by your Community Rep should be held. 3. Prepare draft copy of OS-188, OS-189.
8	1. Receive and review the Letter of Understanding for the Regional Office's requirements for the next year. 2. Prepare final copy of the grant application (Proposal). Check to see that other Policy groups and staff are doing their parts --- nothing is accomplished by just one group.
9	1. Give PC's final approval to the Funding Request and forward it at the Board. 2. Submit funding request to OCD.
10	1. By the end of this Month the Governor should have approved your grant.
11	
12 PYE	Your program year end (PYE) date is the last day of the last Month of a Head Start Year. You should receive funds by the last day of this month.

APPENDIX C

Sample — By-Laws for a Head Start Policy Council
A Guide for Revising or Developing By-Laws

It is strongly recommended that points contained in these By-Laws be thoroughly discussed with the Board of Directors or their representatives.

Compiled by
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Parent Involvement and
Social Services Specialist
Region IV — Office of Child Development

ARTICLE I NAME
The name of this organization shall be the _____ Head Start Policy Council.

ARTICLE II PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS
Section 1
The purpose shall be to: implement Head Start Policy Manual, Transmittal Notice 70.2, dated August 10, 1970, for which this Head Start Policy Council is created to serve as a link between public and private organizations, the grantee Board of Directors, the communities served and the parents of children enrolled in the planning and coordinating of the Head Start program in the counties of _____ in the state of _____.

Section 2
The functions of the _____ Head Start Policy Council, in accordance with HEW/OCD Regulations are:

1. Initiate suggestions and ideas for program improvements, and to receive periodic reports on action taken by the administering agency with regard to its recommendations.
2. Plan, coordinate and organize agency-wide activities for Head Start parents with the assistance of the staff.
3. Administer the Parent Activity Fund.
4. Recruit volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations; and mobilize community resources to meet identified needs.
5. Communicate with all parents and encourage their full participation in the Head Start program.
6. Approve the goals for Head Start within the agency as proposed by the Grantee Board of Directors, and develop ways to meet these goals within HEW/OCD Guidelines.
7. Approve the locations of Head Start centers.
8. Assist in developing a plan for recruitment of eligible children and approve such a plan.
9. Approve the composition of the appropriate parent policy making groups and methods for setting them up within HEW/OCD Guidelines.
10. Approve the services provided to Head Start from the grantee Central Office.
11. Policy Council will serve as an intermediary or group that assists or attempts to resolve complaints about Head Start.
12. Be consulted to ensure that standards for acquiring space, equipment and supplies are met.
13. Be consulted in the direction of the Head Start staff in the day to day operations.
14. Approve or disapprove the Head Start Personnel Procedures (including establishment of hiring and firing criteria for Head Start staff, career development plans and employee grievance procedures).
15. Approve the hiring and/or firing of the Head Start Director.
16. Approve or disapprove the hiring and/or firing of the Head Start staff. With priority for the hiring of qualified Head Start parents.
17. Approve or disapprove the request for funds and proposed work programs (the grant package) prior to sending to HEW, with sufficient time to study the grant package and ask questions of Head Start and Grantee personnel.
18. Approve or disapprove major changes in the Head Start operating budget and work program while the program is in operation.
19. Approve or disapprove information prepared for the pre-review to HEW.
20. Conduct a self-evaluation of the Head Start program.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP
Section 1
The Policy Council shall be composed of members, with at least 50 percent of the membership comprised of parents of a child currently enrolled in Head Start in accordance with HEW/OCD Guidelines.

Section 2 Two Categories
Membership on this Policy Council shall consist of two (2) categories: parent members and community representatives.

a. Each Head Start center with 1-2 units is eligible to elect one parent member to the Policy Council. Parents with a child currently enrolled in that unit(s) will elect by the quorum stated in their Center By-Laws, a parent of a child currently enrolled in that unit(s) to serve on the Policy Council.

b. All community representatives must be approved by the parent members of the Policy Council before they can be seated. Community representatives shall represent major agencies of the communities and counties served by the Head Start agency; with one member of the Grantee Board of Directors included in this category.

Section 3 Term of Office
Policy Council members shall serve for a term of one (1) year. No member shall serve on the Policy Council as a parent member and/or community representative for more than three (3) consecutive years.

Section 4 Voting Rights
Each member of the Policy Council shall have one (1) vote. There shall be no proxy voting by, or for, any member.

Section 5 Termination of Membership
A member of the Policy Council can be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council if he is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without having submitted a legitimate excuse in writing to the Policy Council Chairman (or in his absence the Vice-Chairman) prior to the meeting.

Section 6 Resignation
A member shall give a written statement of reasons before resigning.

Section 7 Vacancy
Any unit(s) shall elect within 30 days a new parent member to the Policy Council whenever there is a vacancy on the Policy Council occurring at that unit(s). If a vacancy occurs from a community representative, the parent members must approve any replacement.

Section 8 Nepotism
In accordance with CAP Memo 23-A, no person can serve as a member of this Policy Council while any member of his immediate family (as outlined in CAP Memo 23-A) is employed in the Head Start program.

Section 9 Duties
All members of this Policy Council should attend meetings regularly; arrive on time for all Policy Council and committee meetings; actively participate in meetings by reading the agenda prior to the meeting and discussing matters to be considered with other parents in the unit(s) he represents; keep informed of the Policy Council's purpose, plans and progress; report back to the parents in the unit(s) he represents any actions taken by the Policy Council; remembers the rights of other members to express their opinions; consider all information and arguments before voting; remembering the parents he represents; debate the issues, not persons; and accept and support any final decisions of the majority of the Policy Council.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS
Section 1
The Policy Council shall elect a Chairman and Secretary who shall be parent members of the Policy Council. Other officers shall be a Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, and other officers as deemed necessary.

Section 2 Election and Term of Office
Each officer shall be elected by the full membership of the Policy Council once the full Policy Council has been seated and shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Section 3 Removal
Any officer or member of this Policy Council who fails to perform his duties as outlined above or below, can be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council.

Section 4 Chairman
The Chairman shall preside at all meetings; talk no more than necessary when presiding; have an understanding of the By-Laws of the Policy Council; refrain from entering into debates of questions before assembly; shall extend every courtesy to the discussions of the motions; shall call meetings to order and formally close them; note whether a quorum is present and declaration of same; prepare an agenda for each regular meeting and mail it to each member with notice of each regular meeting; shall call special meetings and mail notices of special meetings and explanations of same to each member; appoint chairman to all committees; explain each motion before it is voted upon; and may vote to break a tie.

Section 5 Vice-Chairman
The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman or whenever the Chairman temporarily vacates the chair; in case of resignation or death of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall assume the Office of Chairman until a permanent Chairman is elected.

Section 6 Secretary
The Secretary shall record the minutes of every Policy Council meeting once the meeting has been called to order; keep a copy of the By-Laws, standing rules, list of members, a list of unfinished business and a copy of the agenda; mail copies of the minutes to each Policy Council member in advance of the meeting; see that a record of minutes is kept on file in the Head Start office; and receives and handles all mail addressed to the Policy Council.

Section 7 Treasurer
The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of the Policy Council's checking account as to all money received and/or spent; signs all checks; and makes regular reports to the Policy Council of all expenditures relating to the administration of the Parent Activity Fund and any other funds or monies received and disbursed.

ARTICLE V COMMITTEES
Section 1
The Policy Council shall appoint such committees as are necessary to the proper conduct of its business, including but not limited to the following: Executive Committee, Personnel Committee, Grievance Committee, and Finance Committee.

Section 2 Executive Committee
The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Officers of this Policy Council. This Executive Committee shall have the power to conduct business for the Policy Council between regular meetings of the Policy Council.

Section 3 Grievance Committee
As stipulated in the functions of this Policy Council, this committee shall hear grievances from the community, and from parents who have followed the grievance procedures at the center level, about the Head Start program; and make recommendations to the Policy Council to resolve these complaints. This committee may also hear grievances of Head Start staff and present their findings to the Personnel Committee or grantee Board of Directors.

Section 4 Personnel Committee
As stipulated in the functions of this Policy Council, this committee will discuss the Head Start Personnel Policies and Procedures and make recommendations to the Policy Council prior to the Policy Council approving said Personnel Policies and Procedures. This Committee will also screen, interview and recommend persons to be hired to fill vacancies in the Head Start staff.

Section 5 Finance Committee
As stipulated in the functions of this Policy Council, this committee will prepare the budget for the Parent Activity fund for approval of the Policy Council before being submitted to regional OCD; and recommends to the Policy Council how to administer the Parent Activity Fund and approve expenditures by the Treasurer.

Section 6 Special Committees
Special Committees may be appointed by the Chairman or selected by the Policy Council as the need arises.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS
Section 1 Regular Meetings
Regular meetings of this Policy Council will be held once a month, on the _____ at the _____ in _____ starting at _____.

Section 2 Special Meetings
There will be special meetings of this Policy Council only when the Council sees a need, and all special meetings shall be called by the Chairman at least 48 hours in advance.

Section 3 Notice of Meetings
Written notices shall be mailed to each member of the Policy Council by the Chairman at least five (5) days prior to the date of each regular meeting. A copy of the agenda for the meeting will also be enclosed.

Notices of special meetings shall be mailed to each Policy Council member by the Chairman at least 48 hours prior to the date of the meeting with an explanation for calling the special meeting. Follow-up phone calls by the Secretary may be in order.

Section 4 Quorum
A majority of _____ of the members of this Policy Council must be present to constitute a quorum for regular or special meetings to transact business.

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS
These By-Laws may be amended by sending a copy of the proposed amendment to each Policy Council member at least one (1) week before the meeting. The Policy Council may debate an amendment before adoption. Amendments must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council.

Chairman, Board of Directors

_____

Chairman, Policy Council

_____

Points to consider in preparing By-Laws for your agency:

Meetings open to the public
What method of parliamentary procedure shall be followed?
What about parent member alternates?
What about compensation for poverty-level parent members travel and babysitting?
Should a nominating committee be named to draw up a slate of officers?
What is the membership of standing committees?
How are vacancies on committees filled?

In developing Policy Council By-Laws, please consult and follow Head Start Regulations as outlined in Head Start Manual Revision 70.2.

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

READER EVALUATION FORM

Your assistance in helping us evaluate this publication will be most valuable. Please fill out the form, cut it out, and mail to the address listed below.

1. Does this publication provide the kind of information that is helpful to you? Yes☐ ☐ No ☐
2. Does it contain information and advice which is new to you or do you feel you already possess the knowledge? Yes ☐ No ☐
3. Is the publication easy to read and understand? Yes ☐ No ☐
4. Is the subject presented in an interesting style? Yes ☐ No ☐
5. Does the publication omit substantial information that you believe should be included? Yes ☐ No ☐

   If so, what?–_____

   _____

6. Do your ideas about parent involvement conflict with the ideas presented in this manual? Yes ☐ No ☐

   If yes, share some of your ideas _____

   _____

   _____

7. Name (optional)

   _____

   Title (Director, Staff, Parent, Specialist, etc.)

   _____

   Location of Program

   _____

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